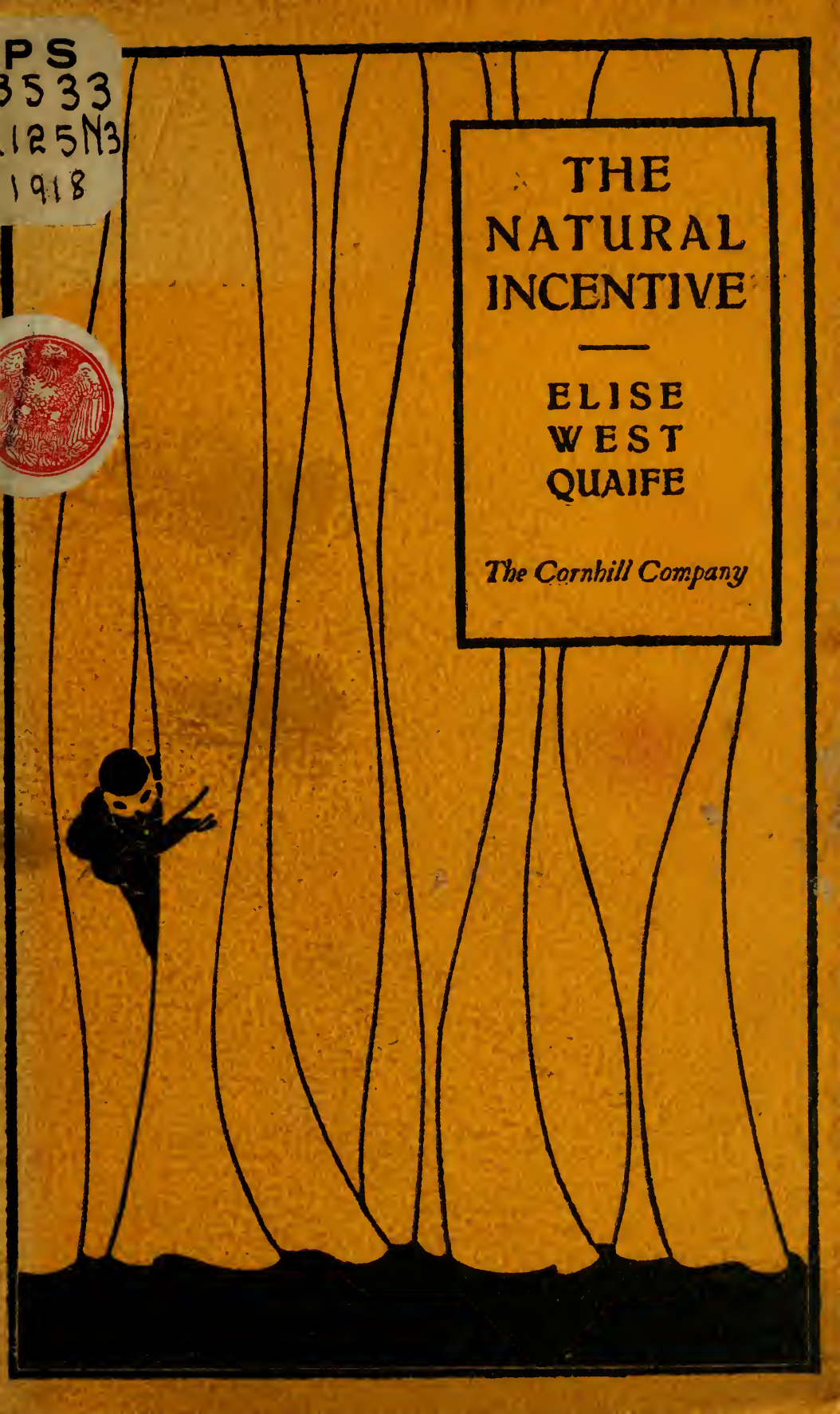
PS
3533
.125N3
1918

THE NATURAL INCENTIVE

ELISE WEST QUAIFE

The Cornhill Company



Class PS 3533
Book .U 125N 3
Copyright No. 1918

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

THE NATURAL INCENTIVE

ELISE WEST QUAIFE

THE CORNHILL COMPANY
BOSTON

PS3533
.W125N3
1918

©CLA506588
no. 1.

TO MR. WINTHROP AMES, WHOSE KINDLY INTEREST HAS BEEN THE INCENTIVE OF MANY A PLAYWRIGHT

CHARACTERS:

ENID TOURNIER: a violinist.
DANIEL WEBSTER WADSWORTH: a sculptor.
MRS. WADSWORTH: his mother.
MISS MORRIS: Enid's watch dog.
BEATRICE STEPHENS: Enid's accompanist.
JACK CLAYTON: an author.
HEPZIBAH QUINN: a servitor.
REV. VINCENT LAPUM: a rector.
MISS BIRDIE HOLLY: a neighbor.
HARRISON, a butler.

TIME:

THE PRESENT

ACT I. ENID'S STUDIO IN PARIS.
ACT II. THE LIVING ROOM OF THE WADSWORTH HOME ON BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.
ACT III. THE LIBRARY OF THE WADSWORTH HOME AT HILLCREST, N. H.
ACT IV. THE SAME, FOUR MONTHS LATER.

(Two years are supposed to have elapsed between Acts II and III.)

Copyright, 1918
by
The Cornhill Company

Copyright, by Elise West Quaife, as dramatic composition, "The Natural Incentive." All rights reserved, including that of translation into foreign languages

NOV -7 1918

THE NATURAL INCENTIVE

ACT I

THE NATURAL INCENTIVE

ACT I

Enid's studio in Paris, five o'clock on a sunny afternoon in April.

It is a large, comfortable, convenient room. A small wood fire is burning in the open fireplace, under the mantel, at Left. The furnishings are inexpensive, but artistic. A grand piano, at Right, stands where the light from the wide French window falls full upon the key board. There is a pile of music upon the piano and sheets of it are scattered over the low cushioned window seat. There is a note in a white envelope beside an old clock on the mantel, and a deep jar of blue pottery stands on the piano. A high yellow stained glass window is set in the wall at left back.

Curtains, Right back, conceal entrance to a narrow hallway which leads to outer door. There is a large easy armchair by fire. A low wicker table at Right Centre, holds a spirit lamp and dull blue tea cups and saucers. A large black cat is on couch.

At rise of curtain, Miss Morris is discovered sitting bolt upright in easy chair before fireplace. She is a brisk, brusque, middle-aged little woman, plain, yet distinctly prepossessing. Her habit of nodding vehemently as she talks emphasizes her alert manner. She endeavors to conceal her emotion in the terseness of her language.

She is enveloped in a long, steamer coat and a close felt hat is pulled defiantly down over her soft greyish hair. Her suit case with, " French Line," and " American Express " labels conspicuous, and her steamer rug done up in a shawl strap are standing near her, and she has evidently just begun a conversa-

tion with JACK CLAYTON, a genial and strikingly handsome young man who leans against the mantel rolling a cigarette. JACK is not inclined to view the world seriously. Everyone adores him, but everyone — excepting BEATRICE STEPHENS — takes him lightly.

There is a subtle bond of understanding between the apparently flippant young author and the dark-browed, quiet Southern girl. BEATRICE moves lazily, yet whenever she looks at JACK her eyes brighten and in the midst of his clever repartee he turns to her for approval. This entirely escapes the notice of the others, who look upon JACK as ENID'S slave.

While MISS MORRIS questions JACK, BEATRICE stands at the piano turning over some sheets of manuscript music.

MISS MORRIS (*draws off gloves*): I tell you it's absurd — perfectly absurd — What business has a woman like Enid to marry anyway?

JACK CLAYTON (*amused, lights cigarette*): I believe, Miss Morris, it is generally conceded that marriage is the one business to which the calling and election of woman is sure.

MISS MORRIS (*removes coat and hat*): "Generally conceded" — "Calling of woman!" Jack Clayton, I am surprised you didn't outgrow those platitudes with your first mustache.

JACK CLAYTON (*lazily*): Never had a mustache, dear lady, besides, platitudes are an author's staff of life.

MISS MORRIS (*sharply*): Stop scintillating and be sensible. Is it really true that Enid Tournier is going to marry this worthless nobody?

JACK CLAYTON (*blows rings of smoke*): That isn't the way I work out the proposition, but your theorem is correct. She is going to marry Daniel Wadsworth.

MISS MORRIS: Oh dear, oh dear! Why did I go to America? This would not have happened if I had been here.

BEATRICE (*with a piece of music in her hand goes leisurely to the piano stool*): Then, Morry, although we missed you desperately, let us thank the saints you were detained in Oshkosh; (*twists stool*) or was it Kalamazoo? (*Tinkles a note or two insolently*) or — Kankakee?

MISS MORRIS: Orange, New Jersey, my dear; a grafted sprig of New York City, the fruit of which is yet green. I wouldn't have remained there an hour, but my income was tied up in some property, and I couldn't get away.

JACK CLAYTON (*kindly*): Let us hope you undid the knots, Miss Morris.

MISS MORRIS (*brightly*): Yes, I am now a person of wealth and importance. Five Hundred Dollars a year for life. I can pet my fads and cuddle my fancies.

BEATRICE (*who has been noiselessly fingering the score*): Got a large family of them, Morry? Five hundred won't support many children.

MISS MORRIS: No, Enid is my only babe at present. (*Aggrieved*) And the minute my back is turned, she runs bump into a sand bank, mistakes it for a feather bed, and flops down on it to rest. Rest, for Enid, means what a winter in a drafty stable does for a race horse.

JACK CLAYTON (*amused*): You think she is taking Wadsworth as a sleeping potion?

MISS MORRIS (*nods*): She has had a hard season. (*To Bee*) Bee shows the strain. You are thin as a rail, and you

only play Enid's accompaniments. I suppose her nerves are worn to a frazzle.

(*Jack and Bee look at each other and burst out laughing.*)

JACK CLAYTON: Wait till you see her before you talk of shattered nerves. This is April, is it not? (*Miss Morris nods.*) Well, the flowers of spring aren't in it with Enid. She is a blooming example of the medicinal value of love and success.

MISS MORRIS (*sniffs*): Humph! You think so, Silly, because her eyes are bright and her cheeks are red. I know Enid; she is like a skyrocket — most brilliant when about to drop. Haven't I devoted three years to guarding her from the effects of sputtering emotion? (*Rises. Throws coat and hat on couch; walks about wringing her hands*) She seemed entirely free from sentimentality, or I wouldn't have left her for a gold mine. (*To Bee*) Why didn't you write me?

BEATRICE (*shrugs*): I was not sure she was serious. You know Enid's way with men. She plays upon heart-strings as if they were cat-gut.

MISS MORRIS (*snaps back*): Well, at any rate she brings music out of them. No man has ever been the worse for loving Enid Tournier. But *marriage* was as far removed from her thoughts as from — (*she crosses to Jack, lays her hand on his arm*) yours, Jack Clayton, dear scapegrace that you are.

(*Jack glances quickly at Bee who lowers her eyes and bends over her music.*) (*Then he pats the hand on his arm very quietly.*)

JACK CLAYTON: Her chances were infinitely better, however.

MISS MORRIS: Chances! She might have married any one of a dozen men of action. (*Sits in easy chair.*)

JACK CLAYTON (*recovering his poise*): Or the Angel Gabriel, had he blown down to earth to toot a brass horn obligato at one of her recitals — or a Prince of the Blood Royal — or, (*bows*) your humble.

Unfortunately for us who deserve her, there are two things a woman has the privilege of choosing, and one of them is — her husband.

BEATRICE (*mockingly*): I'm curious, Jack.

JACK CLAYTON (*with significance*): I shall be proud to enlighten you whenever you care to pursue the subject.

(*Bee flushes and hastily plays the scale.*)

MISS MORRIS: It's terrible! Terrible!

BEATRICE (*with resentment*): I don't see why you should take it so hard, Morry. Mr. Wadsworth is all the most enterprising mamma could desire for an only daughter. Morally unspotted, physically sound, financially solid, and —

JACK CLAYTON: Socially — ir — re — proach — able! He is the last descendant of a select family which stepped from the deck of the Mayflower straight into the Boston State House.

MISS MORRIS (*very erect*): My dear children, what has the man *done*?

BEATRICE (*still resentful*): When one has several million he doesn't have to do things to be somebody.

MISS MORRIS (*nods hard*): That's just where you are wrong. Any fool can inherit gilt-edged securities.

BEATRICE (*impatient*): You talk like a phonograph, Morry. Mr. Wadsworth is a man of dignity and culture. Besides, he has done some rather remarkable clay modeling.

MISS MORRIS (*dryly*): Yes, I read the announcement in the Herald: "Enid Tournier, a young American who has attained fame in Paris as a violinist, is about to be married to Daniel Wadsworth, a sculptor from Boston."

It took me just six hours to catch the first outward bound steamer and here I am. (*Points to luggage*) I thought you would both feel as I do, instead of which — (*she furtively daps her eyes with her handkerchief. Beatrice sits sullenly silent, but Jack pats Miss Morris reassuringly on the arm.*)

JACK CLAYTON: Come, cheer up. Wadsworth really is a very good sort.

MISS MORRIS (*with faint hope*): *Is* he a sculptor?

JACK CLAYTON: He's not a St. Gaudens, but he models well and he understands effects.

MISS MORRIS (*hopelessly*): I know that kind. They never burn their fingers in the fire of inspiration.

BEATRICE (*impatiently*): But she loves him, Morry. She's positively daffy over him. She was restless as a hornet from the day she met him until he proposed.

MISS MORRIS (*with scorn*): Loves him! You mean she is fascinated by his personality. What does she know of him, or he of her? I tell you they are different breeds. At bottom, Enid respects nothing but efficiency and energy;

when the glamour wears off she'll be dissatisfied and make him uncomfortable.

BEATRICE: No one loves comfort more than Enid.

MISS MORRIS (*sharply*): So! You encouraged her. That explains a lot.

BEATRICE (*hotly*): I took no hand in her affairs.

JACK CLAYTON: That's straight. Bee plays the game. (*Smiles at Beatrice*) Even if she was fond of a chap herself she'd not take him if Enid wanted him.

MISS MORRIS: Rubbish! Bee is no second fiddler.

(*Bell rings outside. Beatrice goes into hall.*)

VOICE OUTSIDE: Miss Tournier? Chez elle?

BEATRICE: Oui.

VOICE: Signer, s'll vous plait.

MISS MORRIS (*to Jack*): Is the man very rich?

(*Bee enters with a long florist box. Takes out a mass of yellow jonquils.*)

JACK CLAYTON (*points to flowers*): Behold! He has gold — and gold — and more gold.

BEATRICE (*arranges them in jar on piano*): They come every day.

MISS MORRIS: If he had been a genius — or a poor man —

JACK CLAYTON (*bows*): Synonymous terms, dear lady.

(*Bee returns to seat on piano stool.*)

MISS MORRIS: Enid would have had an incentive to urge her to higher flights of musical endeavor. But he'll clip her wings; you'll see.

(*They stare at each other drearily for a moment. Then, with a heavy crash of chords Beatrice pushes back the piano stool,*

rises, goes to the casement window and throws the sash wide open.)

BEATRICE: Don't croak so. Wings are all the style in Boston. They like clever folks there.

MISS MORRIS (*nods*): Yes, but they don't want them in their own families.

(*Key is heard in door outside.*)

JACK CLAYTON: Here she comes. Hurry, Morry, look cheerful, if you don't feel so.

(*Enid is heard humming a merry tune in hall outside, and darts into the room, violin case and music roll in hand. She is a rather tall, slender girl of twenty-two, with a firm mouth and dancing eyes. She has a quaint, childish manner, and is exquisitely graceful in action. She has a quantity of soft dark hair which she wears twisted closely about her head. Her gown is a straight-cut soft crepe, very simple yet artistic. She wears a small close hat. She is the impersonation of artistic daintiness, combined with a touch of rural strength.*)

ENID: I'm dreadfully sorry to be so late—(*sees Miss Morris, stops short with a cry of joy*) Morry! Here, Jack, take the violin. (*She fairly flings it at him and rushes to embrace Miss Morris.*) Oh, Morry, you *darling!* I am so glad to see you!

MISS MORRIS (*brokenly*): My little white lamb, your watch dog has come back.

ENID (*holds her at arm's length, then draws her close*): How I have missed you! I wouldn't bleat until your vacation was over, but I have perished for a sight of your nod.

(*Miss Morris laughs and nods vehemently through tears.*) *Enid impetuously kisses her on both cheeks.*)

I have ached for the sound of your bark. Sit right down in your old place and scold me *hard*, so I may be sure you are real.

(*Pushes Miss Morris into wicker chair beside tea table. Removes hat and gloves; puts them on couch; bends to stroke the cat.*)

Here is Medusa; she missed you almost as much as I did. (*Takes cat in arms.*)

Did it see its Auntie Morry? Come visit her while Enid has a cup of tea.

(*Pushes ottoman beside Miss Morris; sits on it, cat in lap.*)

Make the tea, Morry, and answer all my questions at once. My rehearsal was three hours long and I am in need of refreshment — mental and physical. When did you get in? Why didn't you cable you were coming? Do you love me?

(*With a quick upward glance, as a child begging forgiveness.*)

Miss Morris (*lights the spirit lamp with fingers that are none too steady*): At least I wasted no time in coming to you. My trunks are still in the Customs. I didn't wait to parley over my belongings.

Enid (*looks at suit case*): "American Express Co." That ought to make me homesick. It doesn't. Now you are in Paris I shall try to persuade Daniel not to go home this summer.

Miss Morris: We have been discussing your marriage, Enid.

Enid: Of course! Isn't it wonderful?

MISS MORRIS (*nods harder than ever*): Wonderfully sudden. I've been gone only two months.

JACK CLAYTON: Miss Morris feels that the path of matrimony is strewn with the fallen petals of the flowers of aspiration.

ENID (*takes cup of tea, and offers it to him with mock solicitude*): Have some tea, Jacky; it's very soothing to the imagination.

JACK CLAYTON: Thanks; I'll pass it over to Beatrice. She has been exerting hers in the vain attempt to convince Miss Morris of her error.

(*Hands tea to Beatrice.*)

ENID (*laughs*): It was Bee who opened my eyes to the advantages of a permanent address.

MISS MORRIS (*nods*): I thought so. She could have been better employed.

ENID: For once I don't agree with you, dear. By the way, Bee, have we any more of those delicious explosive buns? They are almost as sweet as you are Morry, and when you bite into them they make a noise that scares me almost as much as you do.

(*Bee goes to the cupboard on wall up stage and returns with a plateful of small puff buns which she puts on tea table. Returns to piano.*)

MISS MORRIS: Is it true that you have broken your contract with Strauss and will not play again in public?

ENID (*serenely*): Quite true.

(*She takes a bun. Offers them to Jack, who takes one and regards it quizzically. Enid drinks tea.*)

My farewell appearance is one week from today. And oh, Morry dearest! (*Puts down tea cup, clasps hands in delight.*)

I have written a song — just a bit of a song — but it is the first thing I have ever composed, and even Strauss says it has merit. It is dedicated to Daniel. There is the piano score in the roll, Bee. The clerk finished it this morning.

(*Bee opens roll; takes out mss. sheets.*)

MISS MORRIS (*insistently*): *Why* did you break the contract?

ENID: Daniel wished it. I don't know why. Oh, Morry dear, you are a regular catechism. I've been too busy and happy to inquire his reason. Something about his mother objecting to theatrical folk. (*Makes a wry face*) I object to them myself.

(*Suddenly her face and voice grow wistful.*)

It was hard — at first; even now — sometimes —

BEATRICE (*quickly*): Oh, Enid, I quite forgot. A boy brought that note on the mantel after you had gone out. The flowers just came.

(*Enid jumps up, overturning the cat, who rubs against Miss Morris and is taken on her lap. Enid reads note, and going to the jonquils, puts her arms around them.*)

ENID: I'm happy, Morry. I'm so happy it seems positively immoral. My father preaches that happiness is an invention of the devil.

MISS MORRIS: Just so. An artist has no right to mere happiness.

ENID (*Laughs, catches Jack by both hands and does a dance*

step): I'm not an artist; I'm a girl — almost as young— as Jacky!

JACK CLAYTON: You are my distinguished junior by the space of six months.

ENID: I want to dance all day long. Bee has to terrify me into practicing. Music, on paper, is for mortals. When I play, now, I find my score up there — in the sun.

(*She swings about facing the high yellow window. The sun which has gradually crept higher, now floods the room. Enid reaches both arms up towards it and slowly closes her hands.*)

I want to grasp it, and hold it close — this joy — for fear — like the sunlight — it might slip through my fingers.

(*Turns slowly.*)

And that is the only reason, Morry dear, why I am not to be the servant of the public any longer.

MISS MORRIS: She who gives, gets, Enid. Don't be fooled into believing the contrary.

JACK CLAYTON (*blithely interposing*): Enid has everything she wants — even two cups of tea. You haven't offered me one to quench this — explosive. (*Holds out bun.*)

MISS MORRIS: I beg your pardon.

(*She absently hands him an empty cup. He looks at it ruefully and turns it upside down. She hastily fills it.*)

JACK CLAYTON: Even now you forgot the sugar.

(*He goes to Enid who stands brooding.*)

Smile on it for me, Princess.

ENID (*smiles in spite of herself*): Silly!

JACK CLAYTON (*with fervor*): Sweet!

(*He takes a lump of sugar, holds it aloft in her direction, kisses it and drops it into his cup. Beatrice frowns, picks up music roll and mss. sheets and starts towards hall.*)

BEATRICE: I am going to my room to run this score over on my piano.

(*Exits.*)

(*Jack looks after her, checks a whistle, then with a shrug turns again to Enid.*)

JACK CLAYTON: Having disposed of the rest of your one-time necessities, will you kindly mention what is to become of me?

ENID (*gaily*): I turn you over to Morry. She is an adept in taking care of children.

JACK CLAYTON: Stung! I kiss the hand that slays me.

(*He bends to kiss her hand, but she pushes him daintily away with one finger.*)

ENID: Jack, you are a goose, but you are also a very dear boy. Somehow I can't think of you as a writer of serious books. Would you mind running along now. Daniel is due at six and I want him to take Morry and me to dinner. If you stay he will ask you to go along.

JACK CLAYTON: Of all the impudent dismissals!

MISS MORRIS (*rises, puts cat on couch. Takes hat and coat*): I'll go with you, Jack.

(*Enid protests.*)

Some other time, child. Tonight I should be distraite, and spoil your dinner. Besides, I must attend to my luggage.

ENID: I won't let you go until you meet Daniel.

(*Bell rings, she runs into hall, opens outside door.*)

Daniel! Come in. My guardian angel is with me. I want you to know — (*she enters clinging to Daniel's arm*) —Miss Morris.

(*Daniel Wadsworth is a large, well-built blonde; self possessed, but not self sufficient. There is in him that curious blend of force and lack of confidence, so common among New England men. He is extremely well dressed in a quiet way, and his manner denotes leisure.*)

DANIEL WADSWORTH (*bows to Miss Morris*): I am pleased to meet you.

(*Miss Morris regards him fixedly for a moment, then offers him her hand.*)

ENID: I have been chanting your praises to her for the past half hour.

JACK CLAYTON: Chanting! You have been dancing over our remains.

(*Puts his arm around Miss Morris.*)

We have learned that we are not to let our shadows darken a sphere illumined by the light of your effulgent presence. She has forever ruined any chance you had of being liked by either of us, Wadsworth.

(*Daniel smiles indulgently at Enid, who slips a hand under his arm and pouts at Jack.*)

ENID: Don't mind Jack, dearest. He is insane, but harmless.

MISS MORRIS (*who has never taken her eyes from Daniel*): Mr. Wadsworth, you are about to take my one treasure from me. You look as if you would guard it well.

D. WADSWORTH: Thanks! That is my justification.

(*Puts his hand over Enid's.*)

MISS MORRIS (*with a half sob*): Bless you, my children.

(*Turns to wipe eyes.*)

And now, Jack, if you will kindly call a taxi, I will try to pacify those irate officials at the Customs.

ENID: Stop over night with me, dear. You can attend to your luggage in the morning.

MISS MORRIS: No. In the morning I have to see about a house in the country, and my lawyers await my signature to some papers.

(*Turns to Daniel with a pathetic attempt at humor.*)

We monied folks have our troubles, Mr. Wadsworth!

(*He bows, not comprehending her meaning. Jack takes her things as she puts on her hat and coat and they go into hall.*)

ENID (*kissing Miss Morris*): Good-bye, dear; 'phone me as soon as you are settled.

(*To Jack*) Bye-bye, Jack, take good care of her.

JACK CLAYTON: Bye-bye, Princess.

(*Enid stands at curtain, waves her hand after them, then slowly returns to Daniel, puts both hands on his shoulders and rests her cheek on them.*)

ENID: Poor old Morry! It's a blow she didn't expect.

D. WADSWORTH: Our — marriage?

ENID: Yes. I was a coward. I couldn't write her about it. She has devoted every spare moment to me ever since she gave me my first favorable notice in a New York paper. She writes musical critiques, — at least — she did. Recently she came into a small inheritance and she planned

to buy a home in the country — not too far from Paris — where I could swing in a hammock between seasons. I really should go with her this summer, (*Impulsively puts her arm around his neck*) only, I want you — now — while you love me — and I want you all to myself.

D. WADSWORTH (*takes her in his arms*): Sweetheart!

ENID: After our honeymoon —

(*She hesitates — blushes— and he kisses her.*)

D. WADSWORTH: Yes?

ENID (*claps hands*): We will take the little house, and she shall come swing in our hammock.

D. WADSWORTH: I fear that is impossible, dear. We shall have to be at home by the middle of June.

ENID (*wistfully*): Home? Isn't it home where I am?

D. WADSWORTH (*patiently*): The mater could never manage a summer alone. We go up to Hillcrest, in New Hampshire, and she is very dependent upon me. She isn't a great, self-reliant creature like you.

(*He laughs in evident relish of his joke.*

Enid frowns, pushes him down into the easy chair and perches on the arm.)

ENID: I remember. You told me of Hillcrest. That is where you have your outdoor studio. Will you model me?

(*Jumps up, takes pose.*)

How would I look as Diana? She wore short skirts, modern fashion.

D. WADSWORTH (*seriously*): I have written the caretaker to turn the studio into a little club house. We can have a sporty golf course over those New Hampshire hills.

ENID (*aghast*): Where will you do your work then?

D. WADSWORTH: On the links.

ENID: Don't be absurd. You don't intend to loaf all summer do you?

D. WADSWORTH: Dearest mine, you and I, collectively, are going in for one grand loaf. I'll bet you don't comprehend what that means.

ENID (*slowly*): You are discouraged by your failure in the Salon.

(*Eagerly*) That was largely my fault. You couldn't do your best work with me on your mind. Such an exasperating, capricious me.

D. WADSWORTH: Such an adorable, delicious you.

ENID (*laughs*): Such as I am — I am your own, and surely, surely, Daniel, you will be able to mold some masterpiece that will show the world the beauty of a love like ours.

D. WADSWORTH: No. I am a brilliant amateur, perhaps, but I am not a great sculptor.

(*Rises, walks about.*)

The art world over here has opened my eyes to my shortcomings. I can't reach the top, and I am not willing to wobble about on the middle of the ladder.

(*Returns, sits down, draws Enid to him.*)

And so, dear, I am resolved to live the normal life of an American citizen.

ENID: But what will you do?

D. WADSWORTH: Oh, I may open a law office. I was admitted to the bar ten years ago. Had to study law for the sake of my name.

ENID: Your name?

D. WADSWORTH: Don't you know my middle name is Webster?

ENID: No.

D. WADSWORTH: It is. Mother read law briefs to me before she tackled Hans Anderson. The law was the road men of our family had always travelled. I side-tracked, and I've had an upset. Mother will be glad. She looks down on the artistic.

ENID: Then she will look down on me.

D. WADSWORTH: That's different. She belittles art as a profession.

ENID: Is that why you want me to give up my music?

D. WADSWORTH: Not your music, dear, your concert work. (*With enthusiasm*) I've been thinking what a hit you will make with mother's friends. They are all musical.

ENID (*rises*): Yes? Afternoon teas, or receptions to the new minister?

(*Walks over to piano, pulls a jonquil out of the jar. Returns.*)

No, Daniel dear, I have no parlor tricks. Why not let me continue to play in public?

D. WADSWORTH: It would prejudice mother against you.

ENID (*slowly, smiling at him over the jonquil*): Would that be — fatal?

D. WADSWORTH: The real reason is my own prejudice against having you the target for unnecessary comment and criticism.

ENID (*very slowly pulls the jonquil to pieces*): It's rather diffi-

cult for me to see your viewpoint, but I dare say I will come to it. I have been so proud of my success.

(*She turns on him suddenly.*)

Daniel, why is it we have never talked about the way it happened.

D. WADSWORTH (*smiling*): We have been feeling too much to talk about anything. This is the first connected conversation we have ever had. (*Takes her hand*) I prefer the disconnected.

(*He tries to draw her down into his lap, but she eludes him, walks away, and stands by the piano very erect, and looking afar off as in a dream.*)

ENID: I was born in a small village in northern Vermont. My grandfather was a French music-teacher; my father a Methodist minister, as self-sufficient as he was ineffective. I remember, as a child, thinking my mother looked like pictures of the Madonna, but the babies came, faster than they could be cared for, and she was an old woman before I was grown. Always musical, I struggled with our church organ until Mrs. Lane, a summer resident, bought me a violin. I did up her winter preserves to pay for it. How I loved that violin! At night I took it to bed with me.

Mrs. Lane said I had talent and invited me to New York for a year of study. My mother died that Easter. I went home to the funeral. I have never been there since. I played in studios, clubs, restaurants, any place where I could earn money. One day I met Morry; the rest was plain luck. She boosted me along until Strauss brought

me to Paris. The French blood in me caught the French fancy. (*Comes to him*) Today I had an offer to go to Vienna — at my own terms.

D. WADSWORTH: We have had our fling and we have found each other. That is the part that counts, is it not? Now we can settle down and enjoy a peaceful home. We won't be rich, compared with the multi-millionaires, but there is plenty of money for you and me and the children.

ENID (*turns away after a pause*): There must be no children, Daniel.

D. WADSWORTH (*rises in astonishment*): What?

ENID: The very idea is repugnant to me. My mother died in childbirth. The scenes I witnessed as a young girl, when the other babies arrived, left me with an awful dread of ever suffering as she did. (*Shudders*) No, no, I have my music, and you. I don't want children.

D. WADSWORTH (*gravely*): I am disappointed. It's natural a man should look forward to having a family.

ENID: Why?

D. WADSWORTH: I suppose he likes to feel that a son may carve out a Victory where he only blurred the marble.

ENID (*swings around*): See! You use the language of the art you mean to discard because your mother does not approve of it. She has stunted your development as my parents stunted mine. Half the men one meets are in professions they dislike because their parents willed it so.

(*Comes to center stage.*)

If I had a child I should wish him to be free. (*Opens arms*

wide) To grow up unhampered by conventionality, unfettered by family tradition.

(*Turns to Daniel.*)

This would not please you. You are a typical, conventional Bostonian. (*Very wistfully*) Why, dear, you intend to shut me up in a cage. I may no longer make music for the world outside. I adore you, and I consent to the cage — for myself, — but for children, *no*. I have flown, and I know that nothing, nothing else is worth being born for.

D. WADSWORTH: Excepting love.

ENID: Love limits quite as often as it exalts.

(*Goes to him, puts both hands on his shoulders.*)

My Daniel, children would be a barrier, not a bond, between you and me.

D. WADSWORTH (*crushes her to himself passionately*): Have your own way. No son could delight me as you do, no daughter so thrill me. Why I have only just been born myself; born into a world where the only sound is your voice; the only sight, your eyes; the only scent, your hair.

(*They kiss.*)

ENID (*timidly*): Suppose you change?

D. WADSWORTH (*sturdily*): We Wadsworths don't change.

(*From without comes a strain of exquisite music.*)

ENID: Listen! Bee is playing my song. (*She stands radiant*) Do you like it? It is as much yours as mine, for I never wrote a song until I loved you, Daniel.

(*As they listen, he draws her head down on his breast.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

ACT II

The living-room of the Wadsworth home on Beacon Street, Boston, an afternoon of the following February.

The room is stiff and conventional, although furnished with rare old mahogany and beautiful hangings. A coal fire is burning in the grate, and above the mantel there is a large portrait, in oils, of a handsome man in costume of a Colonial judge. There are magazines on the centre table, a reading lamp with a green shade, a tall glass dish filled with apples, and a bon bon dish containing candy. A rocking chair is near the fireplace. A vase containing a few roses is on the mantel.

A large silver framed mirror stands on the mantel.

Before curtain rises a brilliant part of a concerto for violin and piano is heard on the stage. The music suddenly ceases with a crashing discord on the violin.

CURTAIN RISES; BEATRICE is discovered at piano with hands suspended above keys; ENID with violin in left hand and bow in right. She lays them both on piano, goes to window up Left, opens it and leans out. She wears a soft silk gown, very dainty and very quaint, which shows *just* a touch of conventionality not seen in her studio attire. Her hair, also, is dressed in more modern fashion.

ENID (*opens window*): Ugh! Let's have some air. This house is stifling.

BEATRICE (*leisurely*): What will Mrs. Wadsworth say if she comes in?

ENID (*slams window down*): How can she breathe in such an atmosphere? After three months of it my lungs are fairly perforated.

BEATRICE: Going to practice any more?

ENID: No. (*Walks restlessly about.*)

I can't play that music. Old, dead notes; they rattle over my violin strings like dry bones.

(*Stops centre stage, hands over heart.*)

My nocturne throbs — here — (*heart*) and at night its melody soars through my brain. (*Turns*) I have stopped trying to sleep.

BEATRICE (*dryly*): No wonder you are cross.

ENID: I'll sleep, once I have played it before an audience and heard the applause.

BEATRICE: Has Jack gone down-town for our steamer tickets?

ENID: Yes, Daniel has consented to our sailing on March first. Two more weeks of prison — and then — the open sky!

BEATRICE: Why do we go so soon? You don't play in London until April.

ENID: I must have at least a month in Paris to pull myself together.

BEATRICE: You need it. You are a bunch of nerves.

ENID (*sits*): I know, but back in the old studio with Morry to love me, and Jack to encourage me, and you to work with me, I shall be myself again. Won't we have a good time, Bee? In my mind's eye I already see — explosive buns! (*Snaps fingers*) New England boiled dinners and friends of the family have nearly ruined my digestion.

(*Opens window again*) It's snowing now; five minutes ago it was raining. A study in climate — Boston.

BEATRICE (*gathers music together*): Enid, you were positively

rude to Mrs. Wadsworth last night when she asked you to play for the Barretts.

ENID (*wilfully*): If she wants a cabaret performance at her dinners she should engage cabaret performers.

BEATRICE: You owe respect to your husband's mother.

ENID (*passionately*): I hate her. She has ruined Daniel.

BEATRICE (*comes forward quietly*): Oh, no; she has merely turned him into a masculine copy of herself.

ENID: She has coddled him, and coerced him, and repressed him until he is so wound round by her opinions that he is as unable to navigate alone as an Indian pappoose strapped to its mother's back.

BEATRICE: That is his heritage. He accepts it. You should do the same.

ENID: I tell you, Bee, that type of woman does more harm than all your bomb throwing suffragettes. Never tell me Cleopatra was an insolent, strapping hussy. I'll wager she was a dainty, appealing bit of white fire.

BEATRICE: The more reason why, for your own interests, you should win over Mrs. Wadsworth.

ENID: Haven't I tried to be interested in games and gossip? Haven't I learned Five Hundred, and studied "Who's Who in Boston?" What more would you have me do?

BEATRICE: Give up this trip to London.

ENID (*haughtily*): That I will not do. I am surprised at your suggesting it.

BEATRICE: Oh, very well. It's downright selfish of you, however. She is not the only one to be considered. There is Mr. Wadsworth — and — Jack.

ENID (*in obvious surprise*): Jack?

BEATRICE (*with impatience*): Has it not occurred to you that Jack cannot possibly finish his novel in time for Harper's and be off with us to London?

ENID (*carelessly*): Don't worry over Jack, it will do him good to have a steady job. If he attends to my business affairs he will make more money from my concerts in two months than he could on a dozen books.

BEATRICE (*scornfully*): Money!

ENID (*eyes her sharply*): Oh, ho! You are very scornful of it all at once. You were not — always.

BEATRICE: I wanted you to have it.

ENID (*bitterly*): Well, I have it. Daniel has more than paid my price — in money.

BEATRICE: Frankly, Enid, I don't understand you. I urged you to marry Mr. Wadsworth, although it did me out of the little reputation I was gaining as your accompanist, because I thought you had given him your heart.

ENID (*dreamily*): Yes, I gave him my heart, but I forgot to give him my memory. That runs on, piecing my old life and my new together, until I am half crazy. So, I am going back to Paris — to have it out with myself, — (*takes violin caressingly in her arms*) and my old love.

BEATRICE (*pacificly*): Of course, you have missed the excitement.

ENID (*laughs derisively*): There have been more strange experiences crowded into this year than in the whole of my life. It's not excitement I want — it's peace.

BEATRICE (*decisively*): What you really want, is a child.

(*Enid starts violently, and looks sharply at Bee, but she goes on calmly*) Morry was right. You'll never be content to sit down with folded hands. You are too creative for that.

ENID (*hotly*): And pray what chance would a child have in this house? He would be cramped by old-fashioned notions; he would be enervated by luxury; and any individuality he might exhibit would be promptly squelched. A washerwoman's child would have a better chance.

BEATRICE (*placidly*): Mrs. Wadwsorth would be difficult to deal with, but you could manage her.

ENID (*nervously*): Let's get out of doors. The Hudsons are coming to dinner; they are not quite as tedious as the Barretts, but they are bad enough. A walk will freshen us up.

BEATRICE: All right. Come along.

(*As they start towards door, it opens, and Hepzibah enters, carrying a glass of malted milk. She is a short, thin, wiry little woman in the early forties. She is a combination of Irish and New England blood, and, as she has lived all her days in the Wadsworth family, is more an adherent than a servant. She wears a short, straight skirt, a fancy plaid shirt waist, and her thin wisp of hair is stretched tightly back from her merry, wrinkled face.*)

HEPZIBAH: I fetched ye a glass o' milk, Mis' Daniel. Harrison sez ye never et a bite to yer lunch. It's real strengthenin'!

ENID (*smiles*): Thanks, Hepsy. I'll drink it when I return.

HEPZIBAH: Whar ye goin'?

ENID (*gaily*): To have a look at the venerable remains of the Charles River.

HEPZIBAH (*astonished*): Shucks! Ye can't go outdoors. It's snowin'! (*Looks towards window.*)

ENID: I know it.

HEPZIBAH: An' the windy open! Ah! (*An Irish shriek*) What will Her say!

(*Closes window. Turns to Enid — coaxingly.*)

Be good now. Drink yer milk loike the angel ye air, an' tomorrer, when it's foine, shneak deown-teown to the movin' pictur show. There's a thriller to the Be-jew.

ENID (*laughs*): You mean the Bijou?

HEPZIBAH: Sure. Michael, he tuk me last night. Don't be tellin' Her; (*jerks thumb towards ceiling*). Her thinks Hell's paved wid movin' pictur shows.

ENID: What did you see, Hepsy?

HEPZIBAH: Rome — o, and Joo—li—et. Wan Romeo an' tin Joo—li—ets. Them Jews have a Mormon manager; no wan woman acts fur him. He gives you yer money's wuth; hires gals in bunches fur his vow-die-vile. Oh! 'Twas swell lasht night. They danced grand. One o' thim Eytalian dances. Here, I'll show yez.

(*She catches Enid by one hand and Bee by the other. Whistles, dances.*)

Bend over loike ye had the colly-wobbles — yez orter wear sheets to look right — neow — jump Jim Crow wid wan leg, an' balance on the ceilin' loike a mosquity wid the other.

(*She kicks, displaying a pair of stout legs in red woolen*

stockings. Laughing heartily, Enid seizes Bee's hands and they twirl around Hepsy, Enid singing.)

ENID: "Here we go round the mulberry bush, the mulberry bush, my fair lady."

(*One braid of her hair becomes loosened and falls down over her shoulder. Hepsy renews her efforts to amuse the girls. Enid sits on a corner of the table and applauds the dancer, clapping her hands in time to the whistling, while Bee, smiling, leans against the writing desk. Just as Hepsy is kicking her highest, Mrs. Wadsworth enters. She is a tiny, frail-looking woman, with a very sweet voice, and a gentle deprecating manner, which, at times, becomes sternly severe. She wears a black silk dress, a tiny white lace cap rests on her white hair and a handsome white lace scarf is over her shoulders. Carries a work bag. She stands aghast at the tableau.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Hepsy!

HEPZIBAH (*pauses, with one leg sticking straight out*): Shucks!

MRS. WADSWORTH (*in her most severe manner*): Hepzibah Quinn, I am shocked!

HEPZIBAH (*brings the leg down with a jerk*): Oh! Peppergrass!

ENID (*scrambles to her feet*): Don't scold her. She was amusing us.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*with a withering glance at Enid's dishevelled hair*): So it seems.

(*Enid hastily pins her braid back into place.*)

(*To Hepsy*) Have you no work to do?

HEPZIBAH (*mutters*): Wurk, wurk is it? I've wurked me fingers to the bone these thirty years to plaze ye, an' me mother afore me, an' me feyther afore her. Wurk!

Who'se moined yer house, an' nussed yer babby, an' cooked fur ye, an' fetched fur ye, an' *stood* ye? Who but Hepzibah Quinn. An' neow, whin yer boy fetches hum his bride, ye'd begrudge me me innercent fun wid her. Watch out, me loidy—I'm lavin' yez. The banshee howled again lasht night. I ain't got Irish blood a'flowin' wid the Connecticut in me veins fur nothin'. There's bad luck a-comin' to this house. Mark me wurds — bad luck — bad luck.

(*She trails out mumbling.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH (*crosses to grate. Sits, arranges her work bag*): If Hepsy was not as faithful as she is foolish I would take her at her word one of these days when she threatens to leave. But I cannot cope with a new cook at my time of life. It is not wise to encourage familiarity in her, however.

ENID (*resentfully*): I'm sorry. I had forgotten that in New England one may only forget the rules of etiquette with one's immediate family.

(*Bee puts finger on lip, but Mrs. Wadsworth does not notice the implied rebuke.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Would you ring for Harrison, please. This room is chilly.

(*Bee rings. Enid gasps and turns towards door.*)

While you were driving yesterday, Enid, Mrs. Barrett showed me the new filet lace embroidery.

(*Takes lace pattern from bag.*)

Would you care to learn it?

(*She threads needle with blue silk ribbon.*)

ENID: No, thank you. I never do embroidery.

MRS. WADSWORTH: But this is quite simple. The pattern is in the lace. You cross-stitch it with the ribbon — so.

ENID: It is such useless work.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Oh, no! It is much fancied for table covers and bureau scarfs.

ENID: You have stacks of those articles already.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*placidly*): A woman must do something.

ENID (*wearily*): True.

(*She moves over to the piano and begins to hum under her breath, fingering noiselessly on the keyboard.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: I never learned to run the sewing machine. I wish I had. It is a great help when one is making flannel garments for the poor.

ENID: Why not learn now?

MRS. WADSWORTH: My dear! At my time of life!

ENID (*coming down*): You are not old. Come abroad with me and I will show you women, a dozen years your senior, who have all sorts of good times.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Yes? There are all sorts of women. I am the old-fashioned kind.

(*To Harrison, who enters*) Some coal, Harrison.

(*He bows.*) (*Exits.*)

Big cities and crowds don't attract me. Home is a safe place, and I like to stay in it.

HEPZIBAH (*outside*): Aye! pile on the coal, Harrison. Let Her warm Herself while Her may. There's bad luck a-comin', bad luck — bad luck.

(*Harrison enters with coal which he puts on grate.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: That will do, Harrison. (*He exits.*)
(*To Enid*) You seem restless, Enid? Don't you want to read aloud to me? I have not even cut the pages of the new "Atlantic."

ENID: Beatrice and I are going to walk.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*in dismay*): To walk! It's snowing!

ENID: That's what Hepsy said. Is snow dangerous?

MRS. WADSWORTH: You will certainly catch cold. You have a slight cough now.

ENID: I have had — ever since I can remember.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Then you ought not to be imprudent. If you need exercise, Daniel will be delighted to play a game of billiards with you.

ENID (*laughs*): No he won't; I can't hit a ball. Don't worry about the snow; as a girl I waded through it up to my arm-pits. I'm not afraid of Boston slush.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*resigned*): Go — if you must, but be sure to wear your overshoes. You *have* over-shoes, have you not?

ENID (*sticks out a well-shod foot*): I wear heavy boots instead.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*rises, pushes button. Hepzibah enters*): Hepsy, get my arctics, and put them on this girl's feet, and hunt up a pair of rubbers for Miss Stephens.

(*Hepzibah exits.*)

(*Enid starts to protest.*)

Not a word — I won't listen to *one word*. I'm not going to have you both down with pneumonia if I can avoid it.

(*She subsides gradually, and the girls exit.*)

(*Harrison enters with a great pile of books.*

What are those, Harrison?

HEPZIBAH: Mr. Daniel's law books, madam. He told me to bring them down stairs.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Take them into the library.

HEPZIBAH: Very well, madam.

(*Exits.*)

(*Mrs. Wadsworth pokes up the fire, removes lace scarf and throws it over the back of her chair. Embroiders. Daniel enters.*)

D. WADSWORTH: Hello, mater; alone?

MRS. WADSWORTH: Yes, my son. Bring a chair up to the fire.

D. WADSWORTH: Thanks. I'll sit here.

(*Sits by table, takes candy, eats it.*)

I've been rummaging about in the attic until, as Hepsy would say, " I'm all het up."

MRS. WADSWORTH: Harrison fairly staggered under your books.

D. WADSWORTH (*jovially*): So did I. I've sorted them over, but, by Jove, they are blanks to me.

(*Crosses his legs comfortably.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: There are two things I hope to see before I die, Daniel.

D. WADSWORTH: Plenty of time, dear.

MRS. WADSWORTH: I want to see you established in your father's law practice, and I want to see a son of yours entered at Harvard.

(*Daniel suddenly becomes tense, but tries to banter.*)

D. WADSWORTH: Do you hanker to be a female Methuselah? Father's practice has scattered to the four corners of the globe. It would take more than one life-time to bring it together again.

MRS. WADSWORTH: At the last it was principally the winding up of estates. Our old friends would rejoice to put their interests into the hands of a Wadsworth. Take some one in with you to attend to the details; this Mr. Clayton is a nice appearing young man.

D. WADSWORTH (*tips back his chair and roars with laughter*): Clayton! Heaven forbid. He doesn't know Blackstone from the Farmer's Almanac.

MRS. WADSWORTH: He could learn, I presume.

D. WADSWORTH: Clayton is no subject for a kindergarten. His mind goes like a tread mill. He'll write something immortal yet.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Too bad! He seems to have little means. This would have been an excellent opening for him in a business way.

D. WADSWORTH (*leans across table*): Mater, you should have founded an orphan asylum, then you could have settled each little orphan in a nice, comfy niche and left him there, with your blessing. Instead of which you have one impossible boy who won't stay put.

MRS. WADSWORTH: At my time of life the only interest one has is the welfare of others, and I am anxious about yours. Your wife and I are not harmonious, my son.

D. WADSWORTH (*rises*): Mother, you don't understand Enid.

MRS. WADSWORTH: I understand that our lives touch at one

point only. We both love you. She desires you should have an occupation; I desire you should have a career. Make us both happy. Take up your father's profession.

D. WADSWORTH (*walks about*): I'll have a try at it, but it doesn't interest me.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*briskly*): Good. Tomorrow I will give you letters to —

D. WADSWORTH: Not tomorrow.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*sharply*): Why not?

D. WADSWORTH: Enid is going away in two weeks. I'll begin then.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*surprised*): Away? To visit her people?

D. WADSWORTH: No. She has been invited to play at the royal marriage in London, and while abroad she wishes to spend some time with Miss Morris in Paris.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*speaking with difficulty*): You — will — go with her — my son?

D. WADSWORTH (*bends; kisses her lightly on the forehead*): No, I shall stay with you — and the law.

(*Makes a wry face.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH (*catches his hand*): Thanks, my son. I could not bear to part with you again.

(*Wipes eyes. Suddenly, with abrupt change of manner*) Why do you let her go?

D. WADSWORTH (*gently*): Enid is not my slave, dear.

MRS. WADSWORTH: She is your wife.

D. WADSWORTH: She is also an artist.

MRS. WADSWORTH: She better be a woman. I must not judge her too harshly. I was not one myself till you came.

I loved your Father — in a give and take fashion — but when your baby fingers closed over mine I learned to love as God does; giving all, asking nothing. (*Very earnestly*) Make Enid a mother, Daniel; then she won't go trapsing around foreign courts like a gypsy.

D. WADSWORTH: Enid is not going to London for amusement. She has composed a nocturne, and she is anxious to play it before the music-loving English.

MRS. WADSWORTH: There! She will sacrifice you for this child of her brain.

D. WADSWORTH: I am proud to have her go.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*shrewdly*): Oh, no. You are too kind to forbid her, but you dislike the idea as much as I do. I've noticed that you have been unhappy for several weeks. (*Firmly*) This is your decisive moment, my son. If you don't assert your rights now you never will.

D. WADSWORTH: My rights are those of one man. Genius belongs to the world.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*with conviction*): Enid is no genius. She has remarkable talent and unusual personal charm, but she is badly spoiled by having had so much flattery.

D. WADSWORTH: She's only a girl, mother.

MRS. WADSWORTH: A capricious one. She left her people for a musical career. She left Miss Morris, who made that career possible, for you. Take care she doesn't leave you for the next overwhelming desire that seizes her.

D. WADSWORTH (*warmly*): That is unfair and untrue. She practically supports her father. She is devoted to Miss Morris — I am almost jealous of that good lady — and

as for my rights — men are mostly tyrants — I prefer to be the exception.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Give me my grandchildren, Daniel. It is only a question of time when your wife will wean you from me. Don't leave me to grow bitter — alone.

D. WADSWORTH (*quietly*): There will be no children, mother.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*puts hand on heart*): Ah!

D. WADSWORTH: Children are not for a temperamental chap like me, and they ruin an artistic woman.

MRS. WADSWORTH: You are wrong, my son.

D. WADSWORTH (*rather roughly to cover over his own emotion*): Anyway I don't want any, and I don't propose to have any, and we'll not discuss the subject further, if you please.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*trembling, puts embroidery in work bag. As she rises her eyes fall upon the portrait over the mantel. She points to it with one shaking finger.*) Suppose old Judge Wadsworth had felt as you do? You are the last of your family, Daniel, a family that has made history and remade law. You would shirk your responsibilities and let it die out. Shame on you! Not want children — you a healthy, sane man. I never thought to condemn you, but I condemn you this day as I would any other — *coward.*

D. WADSWORTH: Mother!

(*He sways towards her blindly, but she wards him off, and with head erect marches out of the door like a soldier.*)

D. WADSWORTH: Oh, my God!

(*He staggers to the writing desk, sits and buries his face in*

his arms, crying silently. After a minute, the door is pushed softly open and Hepsy tiptoes into the room. She comes to Daniel, and puts a hand on his shoulder.)

HEPZIBAH (*in a tone of infinite tenderness*): Laddie!

D. WADSWORTH (*jumps up, dashes his hand across his eyes*): Oh, it's you, Hepsy. You caught me napping.

HEPZIBAH: I heard Her a-goin' on, and I come to ye, loike I used when Her sent ye to bed t'hout yer supper count o' yer drawin' pictures in chalk on the mahogany tables. Don't moind Her, Mr. Daniel. Her don't mean no harm.

D. WADSWORTH (*choking*): I'm discouraged, Hepsy.

HEPZIBAH: Michael, he read in the papers heow the city had buyed wan o' yer wax figgers to put in the liberry. He tuk me deown to look at it t'other night. My, it's grand. Chirpsy, Chirsy, what's her name?

D. WADSWORTH (*diverted*): Terpsichore.

HEPZIBAH: Ah! that's her. Say, her is swell! No man what kin turn out a dame loike *that* need fret if his maw do think him a booby. (*Daniel grins.*) Her kin stand on wan toe, can't her? (*Illustrates*) Better than the movin' pictur gals.

D. WADSWORTH (*drops wearily into chair by fire*): Yes, I was proud of her once, Hepsy.

HEPZIBAH (*timidly*): Wat be the matter widyez, Mr. Daniel? Yer don't mess reound in them white pinnyfores no more t'all. Yer allus dressed up, settin' on a chair, loike ye wuz yer Paw. Ain't yer makin' no wax figgers neow?

D. WADSWORTH: No, Hepsy. I am about to become an — ornament (?) of the bar.

HEPZIBAH (*anxiously*): Shucks! Ye h'ain't taken to liquor be ye? Don't do it, Mr. Daniel. It's been the ruin o' Michael?

D. WADSWORTH: No, no. I am going to have a law office; like father.

HEPZIBAH (*in disgust*): Shucks! You hain't no liar. It's Her hes bin a-pesterin' ye agin. Her allus wuz at it, sence ye wore knickeys. Don't moind Her I say. Ye wuz born wid spice to ye, an' Her can't git it out by tryin' to make ye over into a yeast cake; we can't all riz over night. Mebbe makin' wax figgers hain't so payin' a business as lyin', but it agreed wid ye, and ye don't need the money. Her allus did try to keep everybody's nose to the grindstun.

D. WADSWORTH: You mustn't speak that way of mother.

HEPZIBAH: Shucks! I worship the ground Her walks on, but I wish to Hiven Her would act loike Her wuz at a weddin' sometimes, 'stead o' allus at a fun'rel. Say, Mr. Daniel, I tell ye what this heouse needs — (*comes close impressively*) a babby! That'd chirk her up wonderful.

D. WADSWORTH (*laughs*): Marry Michael and have one, Hepsy. I'll be its god-father.

HEPZIBAH (*chuckles*): Shucks! Yer a caution. Michael an' me is out o' the runnin,' but you an' Mis' Daniel neow —

D. WADSWORTH: No, Hepsy. Luck isn't headed my way. Tell Michael I say he's missing his opportunities. I never offered to be a god-father before.

HEPZIBAH: Shucks, Mr. Daniel! Quit yer foolin'.

(*Jack is heard outside singing, "We're three jolly good fellows." He enters with Enid on one arm, Bee on the other.*)

JACK CLAYTON: Here we are — the three musketeers, ready for adventure — folly — and fun. Hello, Hepsy. What are you going to give us for dinner? Tack-pie?

HEPZIBAH (*chuckles*): Something loike it, Mr. Jack. (*Whispers*) Hardtack!

JACK CLAYTON (*with mock dismay*): Oh Lord!

HEPZIBAH: An'—*clam-chowder.* Shucks! it's past five neow, an' folkses a-comin' to dinner. I must be a-movin'. (*Exits humming "I'm a jolly good feller."*)

JACK CLAYTON (*takes envelope from pocket; hands to Daniel*): Here you are, old man. Two outside state rooms *and* some money back.

ENID: We went to Cook's and got them at a bargain.

D. WADSWORTH: Remnants?

ENID (*nods*): One belonged to a stout gentleman; he is getting the gout. The other to a thin lady; she is getting a divorce.

D. WADSWORTH (*examines them*): Only to Liverpool! Why didn't you buy them through to Paris?

JACK CLAYTON: Enid wouldn't let me.

ENID: After we land, I propose to pay our expenses.

BEATRICE: Enid! You never could keep track of money.

JACK CLAYTON: Lady fair, my fortune is ever at your disposal, but my face is my sole asset at present. Do you propose we travel to Paris on that?

D. WADSWORTH: I have already placed $2,000 to your credit at a bank in Paris, Enid.

ENID: I won't touch it —not one penny of it. I can earn my own money and I intend doing so.

(*Takes hat and coat, and exits.*)

JACK CLAYTON (*whistles*): Phew!

(*To Daniel*) What's the matter with *your* money, old man?

D. WADSWORTH: I have no idea.

JACK CLAYTON: This London adventure begins to look like a frost.

D. WADSWORTH: I will simply change the Paris account to your name, Miss Stephens, and I will place another $2,000 to your credit in London, Clayton. I'll attend to it at once.

(*Exits.*)

BEATRICE: He's a brick!

JACK CLAYTON: Good stuff. I wonder what Enid is up to? At least *we* can't complain. We might run away with our respective gold-pots. Feel like eloping, Bee?

BEATRICE: I feel like asking you a question.

JACK CLAYTON (*sits on sofa*): I have long wanted to ask you one. Come, and begin.

(*Pats sofa invitingly.*)

BEATRICE: How can you go to London and have your novel ready for Harper's by the first of April?

JACK CLAYTON (*cheerfully*): I can't.

BEATRICE: Then why do you go?

JACK CLAYTON: You are going, are you not?

BEATRICE: Oh, Jack, be sensible. This is an opportunity you can't afford to miss.

JACK CLAYTON: "Miss Opportunity has very short back hair. Grab her by the pompadour." Girls don't wear pompadours any more; what would be the correct phrase?

BEATRICE: They are planning to bring it out in serial form, are they not?

JACK CLAYTON: The opportunity?

BEATRICE (*stamps*): *Your novel.*

JACK CLAYTON: Oh yes, yes. My novel. Yes. They think it's doomed to be a " best seller," consequently they will publish it in their magazine and try it on the country dog.

BEATRICE: You ought to make a lot of money on it.

JACK CLAYTON: Daresay.

BEATRICE (*with decision*): You must finish it. Enid and I don't need you.

JACK CLAYTON (*ruefully*): You never do.

BEATRICE: We can manage alone.

JAVK CLAYTON (*rising*): This time you are going to be managed.—within an inch of your lives. Woe be, if you don't make those English nobles sit up and take notice. I shall beat you with a stick no thicker than my thumb. That's English law; Wadsworth looked it up for me. Too bad my thumb isn't thicker. It won't hurt much.

BEATRICE (*imploring*): Don't go, Jack. I'll look after Enid.

JACK CLAYTON: Who will look after you — dear?

BEATRICE: I don't count. You do, and Enid does. Of course she'll miss you, but she will have to get used to missing you, sometime.

JACK CLAYTON: Beatrice, you urged Enid to marry Wadsworth, didn't you?

BEATRICE: Yes.

JACK CLAYTON: Why?

BEATRICE: She was beginning to care for you.

JACK CLAYTON: Yes — and — ?

BEATRICE: You had no income.

JACK CLAYTON: Good Lord! was that it?

BEATRICE: What else?

JACK CLAYTON: Oh, I'm a conceited ass, — only — nothing. (*Suddenly*) I had hoped you might have been jealous.

BEATRICE: Jack, will you finish your novel for Harper's?

JACK CLAYTON: I will — so help me Bob.

(*He holds out his hand. She takes it impulsively.*)

BEATRICE: That's fine.

JACK CLAYTON (*holding her hand fast*): Now let me ask my question.

BEATRICE (*flurried*): It's time to dress for dinner.

JACK CLAYTON: Hang dinner! Bee, dear —

BEATRICE (*gently disengaging herself*): Not now, Jack. (*Smiles*) You are disposed of, but I still have Enid to look after.

JACK CLAYTON (*carelessly*): Oh, I'll look after Enid.

BEATRICE: You?

JACK CLAYTON: I'm twins.

BEATRICE: You persist in going with us.

JACK CLAYTON: Can't let you out of my sight.

BEATRICE: (*vehemently*): Then I wash my hands of you — *both.*

(*Exits, slams door.*)

JACK CLAYTON: Phew! So — that's the way the wind blows. (*He goes over before the fire and balances on his toes meditatively.*) (*Enid enters.*)

ENID: Hello, Jacky. I'm disappointed. I thought you were Daniel.

JACK CLAYTON: Shades of Penelope! Haven't I devoted this whole, perfectly good day to chasing about Boston on your errands? Am I not going to cross the ocean for you, though I hate water like a cat? Haven't I agreed to hobnob with dirty musicians and obsequious reporters in your behalf, and still you cry out, " Where, oh where is my husband? " What has he done so great?

ENID (*sits*): Dear Jack! You and Hepsy are the only ones can make me laugh these days.

(*Clasps hands over knees, and broods.*)

JACK CLAYTON (*gently*): I am neither a priest nor a doctor, Princess, but I am willing to listen if you want to tell me where the ache is.

ENID: Don't! I'm perilously near tears tonight. Don't be good to me. Blame me, as Bee does, or disapprove of me, as Mrs. Wadsworth does, or amuse me, as Hepsy does, or hurt me, as Daniel does, but don't, don't be good to me, or I shall break down.

JACK CLAYTON (*whimsically*): Does Wadsworth beat you with a stick no thicker than his thumb?

ENID: Jack, promise me something.

JACK CLAYTON: Another! I've passed one set of good resolutions today.

ENID: Promise me that you will stand by me, through thick and thin.

JACK CLAYTON: Sounds like the marrigage service.

ENID: No matter how absurd you may think me; no matter how wicked.

JACK CLAYTON (*gravely*): No right ever came out of a wrong, Princess.

ENID: I can't explain, but I must get away and think out what I am to do. It's hard on you, because people may think, when you know the truth, you should tell Daniel, but you won't, will you?

JACK CLAYTON: What is — the truth?

ENID (*suddenly turns, puts arm over chair back and head on it.*) (*sobs*): Oh, I want Morry. If she were only here. Oh Morry, Morry *dear!*

JACK CLAYTON (*thoughtfully*): There, there, you are overwrought.

ENID: That's what — you all — say.

JACK CLAYTON: You married on top of a champagne supper, as it were. You were worn out by the sparkle of your first season. Morry said so, but you looked so fit we didn't believe her, and you have had a hard row to hoe with the ancient Wadsworth, but new scenes will set you up in no time.

ENID (*dries her eyes*): I am not ill, and I am not fanciful, and I am not ennuyé; I've blundered, and I'm paying the penalty. You and Morry are the only people I have to turn to — Bee will side with Daniel. If you will do as I ask — without question — until I can readjust things (*her voice breaks*) I may pull through. If not — (*she gestures hopelessly*).

JACK CLAYTON (*cheerfully*): I'm just the brother you are looking for. Chirk up, Princess. My book can wait. Morry and I will have you jolly as a sand-piper in no time.

ENID: Listen, that's Daniel.

JACK CLAYTON: I'm off.

ENID: *Thanks*, Jack.

(*He exits. Enid stands tensely waiting.*)

D. WADSWORTH (*outside*): I have attended to that money matter. Hope the arrangement will be satisfactory.

JACK CLAYTON (*outside*): Sure to be, old man.

(*Daniel enters. He is in evening clothes. He does not see Enid at once. During the following scene it grows gradually dark until the room is illumined by nothing but the flickering fire.*)

ENID (*timidly*:) Daniel?

(*He stands mute*) In two weeks I shall be gone.

(*Goes to him. Touches his sleeve*) Won't you kiss me?

D. WADSWORTH (*stiffly*): Since the night I found your door locked against me you have shown scant desire for my caresses.

ENID (*holds out both hands*): Look! my hands are so thin my engagement ring won't stay on, and my wedding ring is loose.

D. WADSWORTH: I have suffered, too.

ENID (*humbly*): I'm sorry. I had no mother to go to, and Morry is so far away, and I was frightened.

D. WADSWORTH: Of me?

ENID: Of — life.

D. WADSWORTH: I did everything a man could to please you, Enid. I denied you nothing. I gave you your own way in every particular.

ENID: I believe you — meant to.

D. WADSWORTH: Our summer whirled away in sunshine, and then, out of a clear sky, this storm broke. You planned for a concert tour without consulting me, and you became absorbed in your music to my complete exclusion.

ENID (*dreamily*): The nocturne *is* you. My tender thoughts of you in the night-time, gathered up like flowers and tied together by one thread of passion.

D. WADSWORTH: If you love me, why do you go away?

ENID: I must, dear. I must keep busy. I meant to tell you — everything — that last day at Hillcrest. I planned for the afternoon, alone with you in the old studio, but you went driving with your mother, and were cross when I did not accompany you. I couldn't, dear. I was really ill then. That night I was too miserable to let you in my room. You are proud — so am I, but I can't leave you this way, I can't, dear — (*sobs*) for I may — never — come back.

D. WADSWORTH (*starts*): You would part from me?

ENID: I may — die.

D. WADSWORTH (*relieved*): You are nervous, Enid. You ought to rest, not go dashing off to Paris. I don't object, if you fancy the change will benefit you, but you would be better off at home.

ENID: No, dear, just now I shall be happier at work.

D. WADSWORTH: Why did you refuse that money today?

ENID: I need an incentive to keep me up to the mark.

D. WADSWORTH: The money is yours anyway. Use it or not, it is there if you need it. That knocks out the incentive idea; it did for me. I think if I had been hungry,

just once, and could not have cashed a check, I might have been a sculptor.

ENID (*eagerly*): You *are* a sculptor. Daniel, come with me to Paris. We'll study together. We'll find out just why you failed in the salon. Boston has recognized your ability. Your Terpsichore is the talk of the town.

D. WADSWORTH: Don't tempt me. It would break mother's heart.

ENID: It breaks mine to have you idle.

D. WADSWORTH: I'm going in for the law. I promised mother I would, not an hour ago.

ENID: Other promises have been broken. You promised me —

(*Mrs. Wadsworth opens the door.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Daniel, are you there?

D. WADSWORTH: Yes, mother.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Why are you in the dark?

(*She touches an electric button and the lights flare up.*) (*To Enid*) Not dressed for dinner, Enid? It's past six; the Hudsons will arrive any minute.

ENID: I'm sorry. I had forgotten dinner.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Hurry, please. Mrs. Hudson dislikes to be kept waiting.

ENID: Then won't I do as I am? This is a brand new frock. I'll smooth my hair.

(*As she goes to mirror to do so, she sees the lace scarf Mrs. Wadsworth has left over chair.*)

Look, Daniel dear. Do you remember how I used to dress for our dinners in the Latin Quarter. When all my francs

went for music lessons, a lace scarf constituted my entire dinner wardrobe.

(*She drapes it artistically over her shoulders and tucks the ends away in her belt. She takes a rose from the vase and fastens it in her hair. As she is doing so, Beatrice and Jack in evening clothes enter talking.*)

ENID: (*swings around*): There! How do you like me?

MRS. WADSWORTH (*very coldly*): That might pass for dress in the Latin Quarter, but I should call it masquerading, and rather vulgar masquerading at that. You will oblige me by going directly to your room and making yourself presentable for my guests.

(*She moves serenely over to the fire. There is a moment of absolute silence. Enid looks at Daniel, but he has turned his back on both women. Bee goes to the book shelves, but Jack steps protectingly towards Enid. She clasps both hands tightly over her heart, her eyes flash.*)

ENID: Yes, I will go to my room, and I will stay there until I can get passage on the first out-going steamer, and I will never, never return to this house again.

D. WADSWORTH (*quickly*): I will go with you.

ENID: No. Remain where you are. You belong here. I don't. *Jack* will see that no harm comes to me.

(*Both men step forward simultaneously one on either side of her, and look angrily at each other. A bell rings outside.*)

(*To Mrs. Wadsworth*) There are your guests. Kindly make my excuses to them. I bid you (*moves to door. Jack springs to open it for her*) a very good—evening.

(*She exits. Others stare after her.*)

HARRISON (*Harrison enters*): Mr. and Mrs. Hudson, madam.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Shall we go into the drawing room?

(*Moves to door.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

ACT III

The library at Hillcrest, the country home of the Wadsworth family, five p. m., one June day, two years later. It is a richly furnished, panelled room, one side of which is lined with books in cases, the other is of glass through which may be seen the garden outside. There are practical doors on both sides, and double alcoves, one at Right containing a tea table and a tall clock, the one at Left a writing desk. A large table at Centre contains magazines, a smoking set, and a vase, filled with flowers (poppies). A long cushioned seat runs under the window. There is a fireplace at Centre, with shelves above it. A silver calendar is on the table.

As CURTAIN RISES, ENID is discovered reading in easy chair. She is beautifully dressed in the latest mode, white afternoon gown and wears a number of sapphires. She has changed the arrangement of her hair to conform to fashion, but both in costume and hair-dressing retains a hint of her former quaintness. She is much more mature, and has gained repose.

BEATRICE: A letter, Enid.

ENID (*rises quickly*): From Paris?

BEATRICE (*gives it*): I believe so. (*Sits right of table.*)

ENID (*stands left of table. Reads. Cries out*): He has been ill! Morry would not write for fear of frightening me. (*Reads on*) He is all right now — "adorable," she says. (*Finishes letter. Turns silver calendar towards her.*) This is the tenth of June. I don't dare ask Daniel to let me go abroad again until after Christmas. Six months — and an ocean between him and me! (*Folds letter, puts in bosom.* Would to Heaven I didn't have a Puritan conscience tucked away inside my French heart.

BEATRICE: Would to Heaven you had some common-sense.

ENID (*laughs. Goes behind Beatrice — puts both hands on her shoulders*): Poor Bee! casting in her lot with a gypsy whom no amount of persuasion can transform into a pillar of society! (*Kisses her on top of head*) I am so overjoyed at having you with me once more that I may consent to any sane and — impossible — course of action you recommend.

BEATRICE (*earnestly*): Tell your husband.

ENID (*moves away to Left, behind table, and arranges flowers in vase*): I said " sane," my dear.

BEATRICE: You can't deceive him much longer. The newspapers are likely to get hold of the story at any moment. I don't see how you ever kept it from them.

ENID (*dreamily*): That funny, quaint old house in Brittany! Flooded with sunshine and buried in roses. I think the birds sang there all day and all night. I heard them in my sleep.

BEATRICE (*shortly*): If Mrs. Wadsworth had not had a stroke of apoplexy, you would have heard the toot of your husband's automobile.

ENID (*laughs*): You forget, my dear. Daniel scorns automobiles. The noble animal called " an horse " is the hobby he rides. He went to the Merriman show this afternoon.

(*Goes to clock*) He should be back soon. (*Stands looking out window.*)

BEATRICE: I don't wish to meddle in your affairs, Enid, but Mr. Wadsworth is desperately unhappy.

ENID (*over her shoulder*): If you are interested in skeletons, there are several in our family closet.

BEATRICE: I never saw a man so changed.

ENID (*sits in easy chair*): Two years can change even a granite boulder, and Daniel's nature is not adamantine.

BEATRICE: There are depths to Mr. Wadsworth you have never sounded.

ENID: My dear Bee, Lillith doubtless made that remark to Mrs. Eve regarding Adam — not that I am comparing you with the famous first disturber of domestic bliss. No other woman can view a man from the same angle as his wife; consequently all other women are united in thinking she fails to see him as he is. I appreciate Daniel. I live with his good qualities, but I occasionally meditate on his bad ones.

BEATRICE: If Eve went mooning about as you do, Adam wasn't to blame for noticing Lillith.

ENID: Precisely what do you mean by " mooning about? "

BEATRICE: Oh! — acting as if your thoughts were a thousand miles away.

ENID: They are — I am not sure of the exact distance, but they are across the ocean.

BEATRICE: And Mr. Wadsworth knows it. You stayed in France from Spring until winter that first visit. Since then you have been over twice. Naturally, your husband concludes someone besides Morry is the attraction.

ENID: My music.

BEATRICE (*shakes her head*): You have composed nothing new, and when you broke your London contract, you did

yourself out of future concert work. No, he is not jealous of your music.

ENID (*rises. Walks about*): My dear Bee, don't be analytical. Daniel is simply drifting with the tide of prosperity; occasionally it breaks over his head.

BEATRICE: And what are you standing on the bank for? Why don't you dash in and pull him out?

ENID: I don't dare. We should both go under.

BEATRICE: You are daring enough in other ways. What do you expect to gain by your secrecy?

ENID: Time, for one thing. (*Absently.*)

BEATRICE: You have had two years, and things are getting worse.

ENID: That's the point.

BEATRICE: You can't expect a man to wear a halo for breakfast, Enid. You would hate him if he did. Besides, your own behavior has not been angelic. When he finds out what you have done, he may not forgive you.

ENID: Then I shall have to earn a living.

BEATRICE (*with growing irritation*): You can't. You proved that two years ago. You are so accustomed to luxury now, you *can't* grapple with necessity. We should have been stranded high and dry in Paris if Mr. Wadsworth had not put that money to your credit.

ENID: The circumstances were unusual.

BEATRICE: Circumstances are a toboggan slide. One generally lands at the bottom of the hill if she trusts to them. Take my advice, and stay on top with your husband.

ENID (*takes a bit of white work from basket on table and embroiders a few stitches*): He isn't — on top.

BEATRICE: What do you mean?

ENID (*Puts down embroidery. Sits back of table; leans arms across it. Speaks very earnestly*): You hinted at other women. It has not come to that — as yet, but he reads books he would not have given house room once. He goes to plays he would have condemned unheard. His men companions are clever — but unpleasant.

BEATRICE: That's nothing. When a man doesn't get what is due him at home, he seeks it elsewhere. Mr. Wadsworth likes people; he looked forward to a rather brilliant social life with you as its centre. Don't you realize, Enid, that you have checkmated every move the man has made?

ENID: That's no excuse for his indolence.

BEATRICE: I don't see how you can call Daniel Wadsworth indolent. He is always busy at something. He was up at daybreak this morning. I heard him going out to the stables. He made a hard cross-country run, and now he is riding at the show. What you mean is, he hasn't realized your ambitions for him. Well, you haven't realized his for you.

ENID: Hush! here comes Mrs. Wadsworth. You will find her more changed than Daniel.

(*Enid goes to easy chair and arranges it with cushions from the window seat.*

(*Beatrice goes to alcove at right, and stands by desk. Mrs. Wadsworth enters in a wheeled chair, pushed by Hepsy. She has failed noticeably, and her voice is querulous.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Do be careful, Hepsy. You push me around as if I were a meal bag.

HEPZIBAH: Shucks! I couldn't handle yez carefuller if ye was a crab.

ENID: Bring mother over here into the sun, Hepsy.
(*Hepsy and Enid assist Mrs. Wadsworth to chair.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Now, Hepsy, bring me my tonic, and be quick about it.

HEPZIBAH: Yis'm. (*Turns quickly, knocks over vase, flowers fall on the floor.*) Oh — pepper-grass!

BEATRICE (*comes forward*): I'll pick them up. (*Does so.*)

HEPZIBAH: Thanks, Miss Bee — Sure yer a sight fer sore eyes. (*Exits.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Hepsy grows more awkward every day.

ENID (*brightly*): She grows older every day, mother. (*Takes Bee's hand*) This is my friend, Miss Stephens. You remember she stopped with us two years ago, in Boston.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Certainly, I recall Miss Stephens perfectly. (*To Bee*) When did you arrive?

BEATRICE: Last night.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Ah! I live in my room, and so see little of our company. Where is Daniel, Enid?

ENID: At the Merriman show.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Horses, horses, always horses. He has a stableful of them.

ENID (*soothingly*): He has great hopes of his new mare, Bluebelle.

MRS. WADSWORTH: If his father knew Daniel was showing horses, he would turn in his grave. Sometimes I am tempted to spend the summer elsewhere. Since Hillcrest has become fashionable, it is no longer admirable.
(*Hepsy enters with tonic*) Did you wash the spoon?

HEPZIBAH: Yis'm.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*takes tonic*): By the way, Miss Stephens, what became of that nice young man who visited us when you did? Mr. — Taylor, wasn't it

(*Gives Hepsy spoon and bottle, she exits. Enid goes to fireplace and stands, back to the others. Bee glances at her quickly, then replies.*)

BEATRICE: Clayton.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Yes, that was the name. Where is he now?

BEATRICE (*again looks at Enid*): In Paris.

MRS. WADSWORTH: He was a gentleman, although he was literary. I have wished many times my son had taken him into the law office as I suggested.

BEATRICE: Has Mr. Wadsworth a large practice?

MRS. WADSWORTH: Almost none. During my illness he was obliged to drop his first important cases. Mr. Clayton might have attended to them for him. The principal client was a widow; she would have courted delay — with a good-looking bachelor.

BEATRICE (*gently*): I do not hear personally from Mr. Clayton, but I understand he has recently published a remarkable novel.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Too bad! Now he will never care to go into business with Daniel.

ENID: (*Although evidently vexed, laughs as she turns around*): Why don't you say — " too bad the universe isn't turned by our wind mill? "

MRS. WADSWORTH (*gently*): We each have our own universe, dear. Daniel is mine.

BEATRICE (*at window*): A gentleman is coming up the drive.

ENID (*looks out of the window*): Mercy! the rector is arriving in time for tea. He comes regularly now, and by his appetite I should judge his housekeeper is not generous. I must warn Harrison to have toast and muffins in abundance.

(*Rings. Harrison enters.*)

Order tea, toast, muffins, and cakes at once. Harrison.

HARRISON: Very well, madam. (*Exits.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Mr. Lapum is an excellent pastor, but he is beginning to be a nuisance. Since pouring tea is my only accomplishment at present, possibly he fancies it pleases me to have a constant guest.

(*Harrison ushers in the Rev. Lapum. He is a ruddy, genial, middle-aged Englishman; effusive and affected, but evidently genuine and sincere.*)

LAPUM (*bows low*): Ah! good afternoon, ladies. This is a pretty day, I may say a *most* pretty day. I trust I find you in good spirits today, Mrs. Wadsworth. (*Shakes hands.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Fairly so, thank you.

LAPUM: And the young Mrs. Wadsworth! No need to inquire after your health. Blooming as ever — ever blooming.

ENID: My friend, Miss Stephens, Mr. Lapum.

LAPUM: Ah! charmed to meet you, Miss Stephens. I take it you are a new-comer to our crested hills — Hillcrest — crested hills — you see?

BEATRICE: I have only a day's acquaintance with them.

(*Harrison enters with tea tray; puts it on table and wheels it over to Mrs. Wadsworth. Exits.*)

LAPUM (*smacks his lips*): Your lines have fallen in pleasant places.

(*Draws a chair over near Mrs. Wadsworth.*)

ENID (*roguishly*): Bee has given up the tea habit.

LAPUM (*sympathetically*): Ah! indigestion?

BEATRICE: No — inclination.

LAPUM: I find it a soothing beverage — I may say — most soothing.

(*Takes cup from Mrs. Wadsworth and carries it to Enid, who sits by table.*)

ENID: Try the cream cakes, Bee. They are harmless.

LAPUM: But insidious — most insidious. I have to check my tendency to partake too freely of them.

(*Bee laughs, takes cake. Mr. Lapum sits and partakes largely of toast and cakes with tea.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: If you will excuse me, Mr. Lapum, I will go out for a breath of air while the sun is still shining. Ring for Hepsy, please, Enid.

(*Enid pushes button.*)

LAPUM: If you were a fairy godmother, Mrs. Wadsworth, I would ask you to grant me a wish before you go.

MRS. WADSWORTH: I'm not. What is it?

LAPUM: That Miss Stephens might prove a musician.

ENID: Here's your chance, mother. Weave your spell, and when Bee emerges — presto, she plays the piano.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*to Bee*): You *do* play, do you not?

(*Hepsy enters.*)

Wheel me out on the terrace, Hepsy.

HEPZIBAH: Yis'm.

(*Assists her into wheel chair.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: Good afternoon, Mr. Lapum. Stay and see Daniel. He will be home soon.

LAPUM: I thank you. I came over, as a matter of fact, to try to induce Mr. Wadsworth to start a class in modeling at the parish house.

MRS. WADSWORTH: If I were a fairy godmother, I would certainly loan you my wand for that purpose. I hope you are succeeding in your educational endeavor.

LAPUM: The results are gratifying. I may say — most gratifying.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Good. I'll mail you a check in the morning. Now, Hepsy.

(*Exits at left.*)

LAPUM: A mother in Israel! I may say — a *godmother*, despite her protests!

(*To Bee*) And so, you *do* play, Miss Stephens.

BEATRICE: People are kind enough to say so.

LAPUM: Good! most good.

(*Puts down his tea and goes to her with enthusiasm.*)

Could you — would you be persuaded to assist Mrs. Wadsworth with her classes?

BEATRICE (*to Enid in astonishment*): Classes?

ENID (*takes Mrs. Wadsworth's place at tea table*): I have taken on a number of the villagers as violin pupils. Mr. Lapum is forming classes to keep the young people interested in the church during the summer.

LAPUM (*sighs*): Summer is a most trying season in the Lord's vineyard.

ENID (*seriously*): You will want to help, Bee. There is considerable talent among the children. If I could, I would establish an American conservatory of music free to all.

LAPUM (*cheerfully*): Why not, why not? "Feed my lambs." Music is food for the imagination. Charity too often begins and ends with the stomach.

(*Eats serenely of a large piece of toast.*)

BEATRICE (*laughs*): One can't go far on an empty one.

ENID: This would not be *charity* exactly.

(*Door at left opens and Miss Birdie Holly flutters in. She is a chirpy, country girl* (?) *of thirty-five, very sprightly and youngish. She has dark hair frizzed about her face, and snappy black eyes. She wears a yellow muslin dress, and a black hat trimmed with yellow.*)

BIRDIE: Howdy do, everybody. How cosy and gossipy you look. I just ran over to tell you the latest. (*Shakes finger coyly at Mr. Lapum.*) Better go away, Mr. Lapum; it's not proper.

LAPUM (*gallantly, as he rises, tea plate in hand*): You are ever a bird of good omen, Miss Birdie.

BIRDIE (*tips head sidewise, twitters*): Hear that! Bird — — birdie. You're wonderful on puns, Mr. Lapum. Why don't you use 'em in your sermons? So many more persons would attend service — not but what you are interesting enough as 'tis.

ENID: Miss Holly, this is my musical friend, Miss Stephens.

BIRDIE (*shakes hands with Bee*): Oh, I *love* music.

(*Lapum sits and eats on. Birdie sits left of long table, Bee back of table, Enid at tea table.*)

ENID: Tea?

BIRDIE: No — no tea, thank you. I'm too full of news. (*Impressively*) The neighbors are up in arms.

ENID: About what?

BIRDIE: The Handy dinner last night. You know Mrs. Handy sailed Monday. It seems that Tuesday morning Mr. Handy asked a number of men from town to dine with him and go to the Merriman show today. He also asked several of our men. (*To Enid*) Wasn't Mr. Wadsworth there?

ENID: Yes; I went for Miss Stephens and he thought he would not dine at home alone.

BIRDIE: An excuse to get away! I dare say he was as crazy to be at the Handy racket as the other men.

LAPUM: Explain yourself, Miss Birdie.

BIRDIE (*to Enid*): Did you see two girls get off the train — two huzzies?

ENID: No.

BIRDIE: Well, they did. They were at the Handy dinner, dressed — (*indicates very low neck and short skirt*) as if they wasn't dressed; and after the champagne they danced on the table! ! !

LAPUM: Scandalous!

ENID: How do you know this?

BIRDIE: Mr. Handy discharged the cook. Said he could get on with the Jap butler. She suspicioned, left some things in her room, returned for them, and saw the whole performance. She said Mr. Handy was too fond of his victuals to stand for Japanese cooking unless mischief was brewing.

LAPUM (*piously helps himself to a cream cake*): Be sure your sins will find you out!

BIRDIE (*admiringly*): *Dear* Mr. Lapum, *you* are perfect!

LAPUM: I *strive* to be, Miss Birdie.

(*A horse is heard galloping up to the porch outside. All involuntarily start, and look through the window.*)

D. WADSWORTH (*outside*): Take the mare over to the stables, Edwards.

LAPUM (*rises nervously*): I must be going. Sorry — but Saturday is my busy day.

BIRDIE: Oh, *don't* go. Stay and reprimand Mr. Wadsworth. It will be such fun!

BEATRICE (*mischievously*): How about the class in modeling?

LAPUM (*coughs*): Some more seasonable time, my dear young ladies.

(*Bows and backs out precipitately at right.*)

If you will excuse me — ladies.

(*Daniel in riding clothes, enters left.*)

BIRDIE: We were just speaking of you, Mr. Wadsworth. It was no case of angels, either.

D. WADSWORTH: Oh, good afternoon, Miss Holly. (*To Enid*) Bluebelle won the blue!

ENID: I'm glad. Have some tea?

D. WADSWORTH: Don't mind if I do. The roads are dusty.

(*Flecks trousers with crop.*)

BIRDIE (*significantly*): And I dare say you are dry.

D. WADSWORTH: I beg your pardon?

BIRDIE: We heard how naughty you were,—last night.

(*Shakes finger at him playfully.*)

Oh fie!

ENID: Miss Holly is disturbed over the Handy party.

(*Offers him tea, which he takes.*)

BIRDIE: *You* were the one who drove those girls back to the junction just as the sun was coming up. The cook's brother is station agent. He saw you.

D. WADSWORTH (*sets his tea down untasted*): How in the deuce — ?

BIRDIE: — did I hear of it? A little bird told me. As dear Mr. Lapum would say, bird — birdie! (*Twitters.*) (*Rises*) Now I must run along. I have two more calls to make. I understand you are in charge of the violin church classes, Mrs. Wadsworth. I'm to have the singing. (*Sings, extravagantly*)" Spring is com — m — ing, Spring is com — ing." (*Cowen's "Awakening."*) Good bye, Mrs. Wadsworth. Good bye, Miss Stephens, run over and try my new piano. Good bye, Mr. Wadsworth.

(*Daniel opens door at right for her.*)

You of all men! Oh fie!!

(*Exits.*)

D. WADSWORTH (*looks after her*): Two more calls, eh! What a pity the cat never caught that canary!

(*Enid embroiders.*)

BEATRICE (*leisurely*): Tell us about the show.

D. WADSWORTH (*manifestly upset*): Only a country affair, but I enjoyed training Bluebelle. She was wild as a hawk when I bought her. Do you ride?

BEATRICE: I'm a Kentucky girl.

D. WADSWORTH: Good. Have a canter with me before breakfast tomorrow. I'll give you Bluebelle for your mount.

BEATRICE (*sweeps him a curtesy*): Before breakfast, or after breakfast, or *during* breakfast. I warn you I ride like the wind. That's the only fast thing I do. Have you a riding habit, Enid?

ENID: No. I don't ride. Ask Hepsy. She will hunt one up for you.

BEATRICE: I'll find her now.

(*Exits.*)

(*Enid continues to embroider. Daniel glances apprehensively at her several times. Lights a cigar — lays it down on tray.*)

D. WADSWORTH: Well? (*No response.*) Why don't you say something?

ENID: There seems to be nothing to say.

D. WADSWORTH: Bad as that, eh?

(*He takes a turn or two across the room. Comes back to table. Toys with paper cutter.*)

Yesterday was my birthday.

ENID (*drops embroidery*): I had forgotten.

D. WADSWORTH: So had mother — for the first time. Her memory has not been good since the stroke, but she never forgot her boy's birthday before.

ENID: I'm sorry.

D. WADSWORTH: Oh, it's of no consequence — only — when Handy asked me to make one of his crowd, I declined. I was not aware of his plan for our entertainment, but he had impressed me as a shade more vulgar than the other new-comers, and I did not care to accept his hospitality.

ENID: Then I left you to dine alone on your — birthday.

D. WADSWORTH: I was thirty-eight yesterday. It is not joyous to sit at an empty table and contemplate thirty-eight empty years. Handy 'phoned that two of his men had failed at the last moment; the number would be thirteen. Handy is superstitious: so I went to fill in.

ENID (*has listened tensely*): Why did you drive those women to the station?

D. WADSWORTH (*goes impulsively to her*): I didn't. Dame Gossip is near-sighted. Handy's mare went lame and he borrowed my team; that's all of that. I excused myself at midnight and walked home.

ENID: It is unfortunate.

D. WADSWORTH: It is damnable. Mother must not hear of it.

ENID (*slowly*): I mean — it is unfortunate you should have to explain.

D. WADSWORTH (*questioning*): How?

ENID: Once — I would not have given the report a moment's credence.

D. WADSWORTH: I see.

ENID: Now — (*hesitates.*)

D. WADSWORTH: I might do a dirty deed. Is that your thought?

ENID: I don't like your moral attitude.

D. WADSWORTH: I don't like yours.

ENID: In what way?

D. WADSWORTH: I am your husband — by law, if not by love.

ENID: Yes.

D. WADSWORTH: You live in the house with me, yet we are strangers. This treatment becomes galling to a man's self respect. He wonders where the fault lies.

ENID: Yes?

D. WADSWORTH (*hands on her chair*): Are you ready for the question?

ENID (*lifts her eyes to his calmly*): Are you an unbiased judge?

D. WADSWORTH: Enid, is Clayton the other man?

ENID (*rises in astonishment*): What?

D. WADSWORTH: Some one else, eh? I'm sorry. I had hoped it might be Clayton. He is an honorable chap.

ENID (*faces him across tea table*): Jack is our very good friend — what else?

D. WADSWORTH: You evade.

ENID (*steadily*): I am trying to follow you.

D. WADSWORTH (*leans across table*): *Whom do you go to see in Paris.*

ENID: That is my secret.

D. WADSWORTH (*turns away*): As you please — only — (*walks toward right*) don't throw stones — at my morals.

ENID (*follows him*): Have you summed up the evidence against me? It is circumstantial.

D. WADSWORTH (*swings about*): Is — it — false?

ENID: Yes, it is false.

D. WADSWORTH: Convince me of that.

ENID: To what end?

D. WADSWORTH (*strikes table with fist*): God, Enid! You left me without cause, you returned without explanation; you live with me without intimacy. What are your reasons?

ENID: I can't respect a man who is content to be a failure.

D. WADSWORTH: *You* took the heart out of me before marriage. I had failed as a competitive artist, true, but the man of money is as valuable to society as the creative genius. I intended to use my money in artistic service. You insisted on that no-children compact. It knocked my plans into a cocked hat. Why should I strive to build up the family name if there was to be no family?

ENID: You should have told me this before.

D. WADSWORTH: How could I? You put up the bars.

ENID: You might have — jumped them. (*Shakes her head gravely*) No, Daniel, it isn't my fault you have accomplished nothing. Love should have urged you to greater effort. I am no genius — as your mother will testify, yet, out of my love for you grew the song and the nocturne. If you had been forceful and capable you could not have been downed by any outside influence.

D. WADSWORTH: Perhaps not, but I might have been inspired by one. That was an unnatural compact, Enid. It put me in a false position with mother, with you, and with myself. I wanted children. I would not have married you if I had not thought you would change your mind.

ENID (*passionately*): And suppose I did — the conditions are unchanged. Your mother is intolerant of advanced ideas, your friends are skeptical of artistic endeavor, and you yourself belong to the idle rich. Do you suppose I would bring a child of mine into such an atmosphere? Never! I would starve in a garret with him first.

D. WADSWORTH (*kindly*): Foolish notions, little woman. Get rid of them. Give me a son, and I'll go down into that old studio under the hill (*points*) and work, as I have never worked in my whole careless, aimless life.

I'll show you the stuff we Wadsworths are made of.

ENID (*resolutely*): Then go and begin. Prove to me that you are a strong, self-reliant man, worthy to be entrusted with the training of our boy.

D. WADSWORTH (*bewildered*): Our boy?

ENID (*goes to him. Holds out both hands; he takes them*): My husband, you have a son. He is in Paris with Morry. That's the secret.

(*He stares at her uncomprehending. Then suddenly gathers her in his arms.*)

CURTAIN

ACT IV

ACT IV

The Library at Hillcrest, ten o'clock in the morning, one bright day four months later. There are quantities of autumn flowers about the room and the fireplace is filled with boughs of autumn leaves. A large portrait of a two-year old child, in a silver frame, stands on the table.

CURTAIN RISING, discovers MRS. WADSWORTH seated in rocker, sewing on a baby's dress. She has taken off her mourning and wears a white gown with a violet bow at her throat. She seems much younger. MISS MORRIS is at the library table cutting out paper dolls.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Didn't you enjoy dressing and undressing the baby?

MISS MORRIS: No; the safety pins kept me guessing. My specialty was his vocabulary. Notice how nicely he says "Grandmother."

MRS. WADSWORTH: He is wonderfully advanced for a child two years old.

MISS MORRIS: Modern methods, my dear lady. Put 'em in the open air, feed 'em, leave 'em.

MRS. WADSWORTH: When Daniel was little I took entire charge of him myself. My husband teased me about it, and it di d tie me down considerably, but it was like play ing with a big, live doll. I can't forgive Enid for leaving the baby with you. It was cruel.

MISS MORRIS: It was heroic. Enid is the stuff martyrs are made of.

MRS. WADSWORTH: I prefer the ordinary materials. What good did she suppose could come?

MISS MORRIS: Have you ever noticed how symmetrical a young tree grows that stands alone by itself in an open field?

MRS. WADSWORTH: Yes, but children are not trees.

MISS MORRIS: If they were, more of them might live to maturity. Don't worry over Daniel Wadsworth, Jr. He has the constitution of an Arab and the disposition of an angel. I have made a good job of him — so far.

MRS. WADSWORTH: I realize that you devoted yourself to him.

MISS MORRIS: I had my little country place outside Paris. I had hoped to have Enid with me; I welcomed her child. It was a perfect place for him; quiet, healthful and removed from the public eye.

MRS. WADSWORTH: We have to be thankful to you, and I am, but I am glad we have him with us. He is an abiding source of joy to Daniel. Have you seen his statue, " The Child? "

MISS MORRIS: Yes; he took me stealthily down to the studio. It is a masterly piece of work. At last he has forgotten his mechanics and portrayed an ideal.

MRS. WADSWORTH: It is for Enid on her birthday. He hopes she will have it placed over the door of Wadsworth Hall.

MISS MORRIS: Enid is nothing if not ambitious. Where does she expect to get pupils for this free school of hers?

MRS. WADSWORTH: They will come. The classes started by

Mr. Lapum are a nucleus, but boys and girls will flock anywhere to get instruction without money. I am heartily in favor of Wadsworth Hall.

MISS MORRIS: And endowing it heavily, I understand.

MRS. WADSWORTH: My Christmas gift to my grandson. I may not live to see another Christmas.

MISS MORRIS: Nonsense. You grow younger every day.

MRS. WADSWORTH: I *feel* younger. Daniel is happy. I guess I was wrong to oppose his artistic bent.

MISS MORRIS (*with conviction*): He has a brilliant future.

MRS. WADSWORTH: It's good to hear you say so. Your experience has been wider than mine.

(*Enid and Mr. Lapum are heard outside.*)

MR. LAPUM: — a long procession winding down under the elms, singing as they march.

(*They enter. She is in street attire.*)

ENID: Let us hope they may.

(*To Mrs. Wadsworth*) Good morning, mother dear; how pretty you look. Morry, Mr. Lapum has selected you to write an ode, which I am to set to music, for the dedication exercises at the Hall.

MR. LAPUM: Ah, good morning, ladies. I am indeed planning a beautiful program for that auspicious occasion. I may say — most beautiful! I thought you might — toss off — a few appropriate verses, Miss Morris.

MISS MORRIS: Humph! I'm a poet laureate now, am I? What next?

ENID: It is not imperative you rival Tennyson, Morry.

MR. LAPUM: We are to have an ancient pageant; Mr. Clay-

ton has kindly consented to do the dialogue, but he declines the poetry.

MISS MORRIS: Don't blame him. I'll string some words together. The boy's nurse must do him honor at his first party.

ENID: Better not claim that title in front of Hepsy.

MR. LAPUM: Ah! I had forgotten Hepzibah. She should have some part in the pageant. She has been a constant attendant at the dancing classes and her agility is surprising — most surprising.

MRS. WADSWORTH: I should say as much. She prances about like a kangaroo.

(*Enter Hepsy. She wears a nurse's white cap and apron.*)

HEPZIBAH (*calls*): Mis' Daniel, Mis' Daniel! That babby is the beateree. What do you 'spose he's up and done? (*To Mr. Lapum*) Oh, good morning, sir. He's drawed an animal. (*Exhibits sheet of paper*) 'Taint a horse, and can't properly say it's a pig, but it's got four legs and a tail.

(*Gives to Enid. All look at it.*)

MR. LAPUM: Marvellous! A chip of the old block!

ENID (*laughs*): A shingle. We'll show his Daddy Exhibit No. 1 of the Guess Again Series.

(*Puts paper on mantel.*)

HEPZIBAH: I gin him the piece o' paper to play wid, and the first thing I knowed he found a piece o' his Paw's black chalk an' war a-drawin' wid it.

MRS. WADSWORTH: Mercy! It's a miracle he didn't swallow it.

MR. LAPUM: We were just considering asking you to be in the dance at the festivities, Hepzibah.

HEPZIBAH: Thank you, sir, but I got to give up me dancin'.

MR. LAPUM: I fancied you enjoyed it?

HEPZIBAH: Oh, I do *that*. I hope whin I'm a angel, 'stead o' playin' on a harp, they'll let me dance. Me fingers is stiff, but me toes air spry ez crickets.

MR. LAPUM: Then why —

HEPZIBAH: T'ain't becomin' in his nurse. I got to be a loidy, an' 'tend to me manners if I'm to raise him proper. I can't have him thinkin' I'm wan o' thim movin' pictur gals.

(*Enter Birdie Holly.*)

BIRDIE: Good-morning. I just ran over to bring a gingerbread man for the baby. (*Gives one to Enid*) How is the precious lamb?

(*Starts in apparent surprise*) Hello, Mr. Lapum. Who ever would have dreamed of finding you here so early in the morning?

HEPZIBAH (*aside*): You wud, if you wuz lookin' out the windy.

MR. LAPUM (*gallantly*): An early bird, you know. In this case, I'm the worm. (*Bows.*)

BIRDIE (*coyly*): Oh, I haven't caught you *yet*.

(*To Enid*) Say, I understand we're goin' to have a real "musical conservoire" in Wadsworth Hall. Are we — truly?

ENID: Mr. Wadsworth plans for the best teachers in all the arts.

BIRDIE: Lands! I can take some more singing lessons. My voice isn't what it was, but it's telling yet.

(*Sings directly at Mr. Lapum*) "If the wild wish to see you, and hear you" — ("*Forgotten*," *Cowles.*)

HEPZIBAH: Hush! you'll wake the babby.

(*Exits.*)

BIRDIE: Well, count on me as a pupil.

(*To Mr. Lapum*) And to think we owe it all to you. If you hadn't started those parish classes, Mr. Wadsworth never would have realized what talent we have in Hillcrest. Oh, you're *wonderful.*

MR. LAPUM (*beams*): I do my best.

BIRDIE (*goes to door*): I must run home now. Good-bye.

(*To Mr. Lapum*) Coming my way?

MR. LAPUM: If you will permit it.

BIRDIE: Oh, I'll permit it, all right. Everytime I run over here and see the baby's things lying around, it makes me realize how lonely I am. Good-bye, Mrs. Wadsworth. Kiss the lamb for me.

(*Beatrice enters*) Good morning, Miss Stephens.

(*To Mr. Lapum*) Coming?

MR. LAPUM: One moment, please.

(*To Beatrice*) We are counting on you to play at the dedication, Miss Stephens.

BEATRICE (*blithely*): I'll be there.

MR. LAPUM: Now, Birdie, come along.

(*Tucks her hand under his arm. They exit talking.*)

MRS. WADSWORTH: It looks as if there would soon be a mistress at the rectory.

(*Beatrice has been looking out into the garden humming a tune to herself.*)

ENID: You seem gay, Bee. Evidently it agrees with you to be up half the night.

BEATRICE: Jack's play is accepted. We stayed in Boston to dine with the leading man.

ENID: Good!

(*Jack enters with Daniel.*)

JACK CLAYTON: I tell you, Wadsworth, it is something more than a fad with those fellows. I doubt whether any amount of money or influence would induce them to give up their classes in Paris and come over here.

D. WADSWORTH: They would — if the classes were waiting for them. Why shouldn't America be the art centre of the world? It can afford to be. I believe Wadsworth Hall will develop enough latent talent to attract teachers. A great actor will wish to teach the mysteries of his art to others, if it can be done without expense to himself. So with a great musician; a great painter. It's the joy of the working, my boy, that will do the trick.

JACK CLAYTON: People don't work well in bunches here as they do abroad. There is too much individual competition.

ENID (*saunters between them and thrusts a rose in Jack's face*): When Daniel shuts his mouth — so — (*illustrating*) the Wadsworth fighting blood is up.

JACK CLAYTON: It's a splendid dream, old man, but it will take time.

D. WADSWORTH: I can afford to wait.

JACK CLAYTON: There are few things you can't afford, lucky dog that you are.

MISS MORRIS (*to Jack*): You have the air of a bloated bondholder yourself today. Congratulations.

JACK CLAYTON: Has Bee told you?

ENID: Yes. We are perfectly delighted.

(*Shakes both his hands.*)

JACK CLAYTON (*relieved*): I'm mighty glad you take it that way.

(*Shakes her hands fervently.*)

BEATRICE (*comes forward quickly*): I *didn't* tell them, Jack I only told them about the play.

JACK CLAYTON (*drops Enid's hands*): Oh Lord!

ENID (*smiles at him*): 'Fess up, Jacky!

JACK CLAYTON (*much embarrassed*): The fact is, Bee and I were — I mean we are — that is, we will be —

ENID: Isn't that glorious! When did it happen?

(*Kisses Bee rapturously.*)

BEATRICE (*timidly*): You don't mind, Enid?

ENID: Mind? I have not been so pleased over anything since Daniel proposed to me.

(*Goes to Daniel who puts arm around her.*)

(*Jack and Beatrice look at each other, then laugh.*)

JACK CLAYTON (*to Bee*): Now, young lady, you see what a goose you were. Quarreling with me for two years over nothing.

D. WADSWORTH (*shakes hands with them*): My heartiest good wishes to you both; and let us hope your first will be a girl.

ENID: Oh, *Daniel!* aren't you ashamed. When did it happen, Jack?

JACK CLAYTON: It's been happened ever since a certain good lady (*touches Miss Morris*) introduced me to two young musicians. I convinced Bee that it was the real thing last night.

BEATRICE: Being possessed of his first bank account Jack is eager to pay my bills.

D. WADSWORTH (*laughs*): Here's modern romance for you.

JACK CLAYTON: You may laugh. "He jests at scars who never felt a wound."

ENID: You see the wrong side of the shield, Jack. The bills of the woman he loves are an incentive, — one that can never stimulate a millionaire.

D. WADSWORTH (*puts both hands gayly on Enid's shoulders*): I tell you, Jack, marriage is a prescription formulated to cure a man of his idleness.

ENID (*promptly*): One grain of endeavor, one ounce of kisses; one scruple of strife, one pound of joy.

JACK CLAYTON: Sounds good to me. Enough sweets so you don't taste the bitters.

MRS. WADSWORTH (*gently*): And a home-brew.

BEATRICE: Jack doesn't need your prescription. If he has faults — mind, I don't say he has — idleness is not one of them.

JACK CLAYTON: Thanks, dear, but it is the constitutional malady of mankind.

D. WADSWORTH (*smiling*): And woman is its constitutional remedy.

MISS MORRIS: I appear to be out of this combination.

ENID: You! Why, Morry dear, you and mother are its backbone; you two brought the family together. And here (*takes child's photograph from table; holds it aloft*), here, is its head and front, the dearly beloved natural incentive of the House of Wadsworth.

(*She stands at centre with Daniel. Jack and Bee at right, clasp hands. At left Miss Morris bends over Mrs. Wadsworth.*)

CURTAIN

SEAVER-HOWLAND PRESS
271 Franklin St.
BOSTON

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 015 937 785 4